

The Bible:

A General Introduction

HERBERT C. ALLEMAN



Class BS605

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Lutheran Teacher-Training Series

FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

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SCHOOL LITERATURE COMMITTEE OF THE
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CATION SOCIETY

BOOK ONE

THE BIBLE: A GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Christian
BY HERBERT C. ALLEMAN, D.D.
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

It is with a sense of satisfaction that we present this series of Sunday School Teacher-Training handbooks. Their preparation has been in response to a frequently expressed desire on the part of many of our pastors and teachers. The committee has felt the difficulty of the task and the many conditions to be met. Much consideration has been given to the work, and not a little revision has been found necessary. To enter a field already largely occupied and vindicate our claim that such a series is needed, is no small task. These books have been made, not because there are not already many excellent books on teacher-training, but because none of them covers all the ground we deem requisite. Nothing needs to be more carefully guarded than the character of the literature we give to our Sunday schools. Especially is this true of the helps for the study and teaching of God's word. We lay emphasis upon child-nurture from the viewpoint of our Church's teaching, that baptized children are members of the Church of Christ. The responsibility of the Sunday school in teaching the child is the responsibility of the Church. The teacher, therefore, should know not only his Bible and its message, not only the laws of child-thought and the best methods of influencing the unfolding soul, but he should know what his Church stands for and what it teaches. With this conception of our responsibility we have chosen the subjects and the writers. The work speaks for itself. We believe it will be found adapted to the better equipment of our Lutheran teachers. The series consists of four books, as follows: "The Bible: A General Introduction," "The Pupil and the Teacher," "The Message of the Book" and "The Lutheran Church and Child-Nurture." The aim of these books is to furnish the teachers and

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

officers of our Sunday school with a working knowledge of the Bible as a book and as the message of God to men; of the personality of the pupils, and the principles and methods to be applied in teaching them; of the organization, aim and work of the Sunday school, and of our Lutheran views of the child's relation to the Church.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE COMMITTEE.

BOOK ONE

THE BIBLE: A GENERAL INTRODUCTION

BY HERBERT C. ALLEMAN, D.D.

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FOREWORD

The importance of the study of the Bible in the work of teacher-training can be judged by the minimum requirement of the First Standard Course established by the Committee of Education of the International Sunday School Association, which is "fifty lesson periods, of which at least twenty lessons shall be devoted to the study of the *Bible*."

The Advanced Standard Course requires fifty lessons devoted to the study of the Bible. An increase of this number is contemplated. This book has been designed to meet these requirements, the number of lessons being determined by the fact that a year's study is contemplated. The author believes that nothing essential is omitted in this course. It is his hope, also, that the book may be found useful in schools and Bible classes. This book has received official recognition as an Advanced Standard Course. An examination upon it is necessary for those seeking an Advanced Standard diploma. This course is recommended by our Sunday School Literature Committee.

The course of study consists in answering the questions, which have been prepared with a view to simplicity. As the lessons on the several books of the Bible are necessarily little more than outlines, nothing can take the place of a careful reading of the Bible text itself. The lessons are not of uniform length, because, in the historical section, periods are the units of division, and all periods are not of uniform importance or described in equal detail. For some classes the lessons may need to be divided, with others several lessons may be combined.

Lutheran Teacher-Training Series

BOOK I.—THE BIBLE

LESSON I

THE BOOK AS WE KNOW IT

The **Bible** is the Sunday school teacher's manual, the instrument with which he is to do his work. It goes without saying that the teacher should know his Bible. How can he teach successfully if he does not know his text-book? The confession is frequently made by people that they never knew the Bible until they taught it, which means that they really never studied it until then. We have the deepest veneration for the Bible, but it is a question whether we have not buried it under our veneration. It has been well said: "Century after century men have failed to see what the Bible is. They have made a fetish of it, and under plea of its sacredness they have taken advantage of its many-sidedness to get rid of the task of mastering its essential teaching."

1. Our **first acquaintance** with the Bible is as **a book**. Here it lies in our hand, a beautifully bound volume, made precious, doubtless, by association. It bears the title "The Bible." The name Bible is really plural. It means "the books," from the Greek *βιβλος*, the name of the papyrus reed on which ancient books were written. Rightly understood, therefore, the very title carries with it the declaration that the Bible is not a volume but **a library**. It is not one book but sixty-six. There are thirty-nine books in the Old Testament, and then, after an interspace of four hundred silent years, we have the twenty-seven books of the New Testament.

2. The **names** employed by the writers themselves confirm this view of the Bible. The New Testament writers speak of *αἱ γραφαὶ* which we translate *Scriptures*, a Latin word meaning

"writings." Sometimes they call the books the *Sacred Scriptures*.* They also call the message of Scripture "the word of God." (Eph. vi. 17; Heb. iv. 12.)

3. When we open our Bible we find it divided into many books but **two main divisions**. The first division is called *the Old Testament*; the second, *the New Testament*. The name Testament, as thus used, has an interesting history. It comes from a Greek word which means "arrangement" or "disposition," having the significance of a testament or will. It is the word which the translators of the Septuagint (see p. 147) used by which to translate the Hebrew word for "covenant." St. Paul speaks of the Hebrew Scriptures read in the synagogues as the "old covenant" (2 Cor. iii. 14, R. V.), and of the ministers of Christ as "ministers of the new covenant" (2 Cor. iii. 6). Covenant in the Biblical sense means, as Dr. Ramsay has made clear, "not a compact between two parties, but an irrevocable promise made by God to His people, freely and on His absolute authority, a promise of a religious inheritance into which they could enter by fulfilling the conditions which God on the same absolute authority imposed." But, as another has observed, the conditions are a part of God's beneficent arrangement. "The Old Testament means, therefore, that He would bless them and make them a blessing, the New Testament means God's full and final covenant with man of salvation through Jesus Christ," a covenant sealed by His blood.

4. Each Testament is divided into a number of **books**. In the Hebrew Bible (our Old Testament) there are twenty-four, so that the Jews often spoke of their Scriptures as "the four and twenty"; and the whole is arranged in three divisions—the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings.

I. LAW, *i. e.*, the Pentateuch, the Five Books:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy... 5 books

II. PROPHETS, *viz.*:

1. Former Prophets: (a) Joshua, (b) Judges, (c) Samuel, (d) Kings..... 4 books
2. Latter Prophets: (a) Isaiah, (b) Jeremiah, (c) Ezekiel, (d) the Twelve (Minor Prophets)..... 4 books

* By these terms they refer to the Jewish Scriptures, more particularly "the Law" and "the Prophets." The singular is also frequently used when a passage is indirectly quoted (John vii. 38) or when the Old Testament Scriptures are referred to as a whole (John x. 35, Acts vii. 32, Rom. iv. 3). The word "Scriptures" is never applied to their own writings by the Christian writers of the first century.

III. WRITINGS—Hagiographa (Sacred Writings):

1. Three Books: (a) Psalms, (b) Proverbs, (c) Job. 3 books
2. Five Rolls: (a) Song of Solomon, (b) Ruth,
(c) Lamentations, (d) Ecclesiastes, (e) Esther.. 5 books
3. (a) Daniel, (b) Ezra-Nehemiah, (c) Chronicles.. 3 books

Total 24 books

In our English Bible the Old Testament contains 39 books and the New Testament 27 books. These are all grouped in our Catechism, as follows:

The books of the Old Testament are divided into:

(1) The five books of Moses, also called the Pentateuch, namely, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

(2) The other historical books, namely, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, First and Second Samuel, First and Second Kings, First and Second Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther.

(3) The poetical books, namely, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes or the Preacher, and the Song of Solomon.

(4) The prophetical books, which are divided into the major prophets, namely, Isaiah, Jeremiah (including Lamentations), Ezekiel, and Daniel; and the minor prophets, namely, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

The books of the New Testament are divided into:

(1) The historical books, namely, the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Acts of the Apostles.

(2) The doctrinal books, namely, the fourteen epistles of St. Paul (Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First and Second Thessalonians, First and Second Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews), the seven general epistles (James, First and Second Peter, First, Second and Third Epistles of John, and Jude).

(3) The prophetical book, namely, the Revelation of St. John.

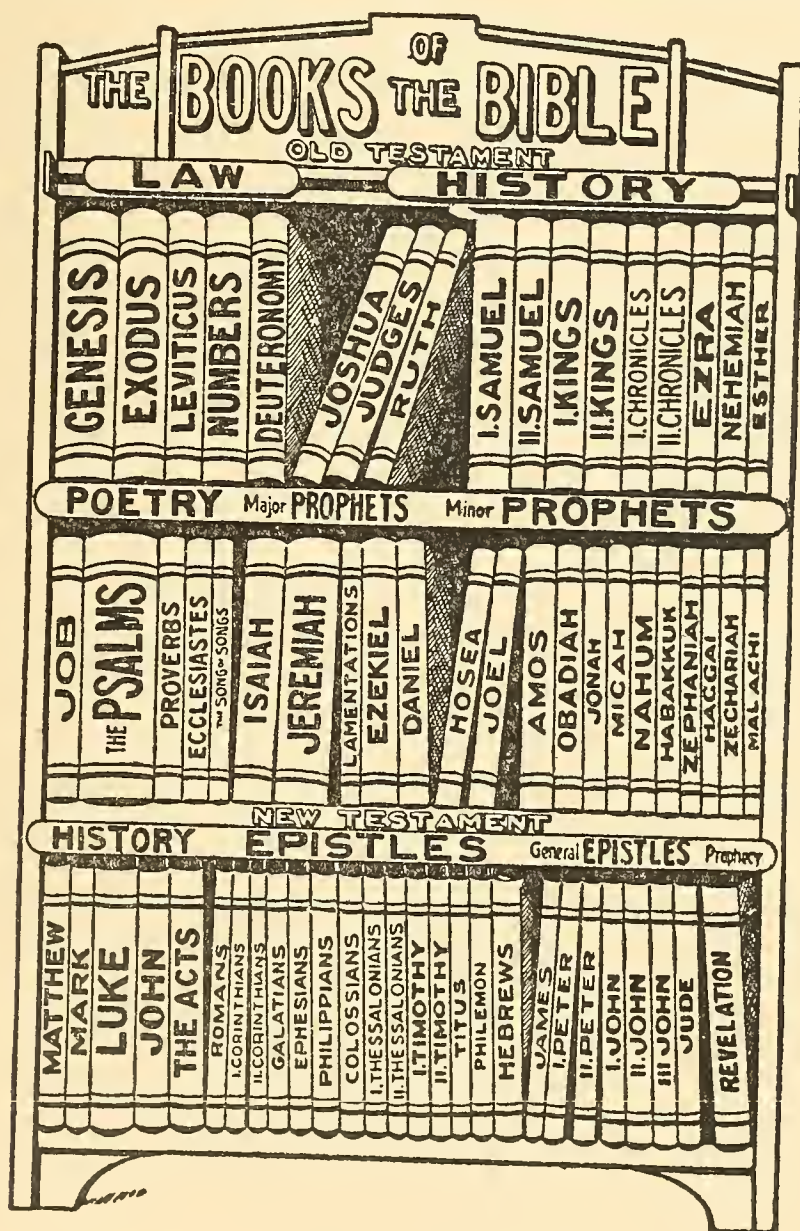
QUESTIONS

1. What is the relation of the Bible to the Sunday school teacher?
2. What does the word "Bible" mean?
3. What are some of the most common names of the Bible?
4. What are the main divisions of the Bible?
5. What is the meaning of the word Testament as here used?
6. What are the main divisions of the Old Testament: (*a*) in the original Hebrew Scriptures; (*b*) as given in our Catechism?
7. What are the main divisions of the New Testament?

LESSON II

THE BOOKS OF THE BOOK

The Sunday school teacher should know the books of the Bible, if possible, in their order, and every Sunday school pupil should so



know them. This may seem a difficult task, but a little patience will enable one to master it. A number of helpful methods have been suggested.

One of the best devices is that of the *Levin-Dechant Chart* cards, a cut* of which is on preceding page.

Dr. Hurlbut, in his "Teacher-Training Lessons," and Dr. U. Myers, in his *Catechism Chart*, suggest the device of the human hand for the books of the Old Testament and the New Testament in turn, using the fingers to indicate the divisions specified for the blackboard below.

A successful method is to take the blackboard and put down the names or initials of the books only just so far as the children learn them, classifying as you go; *e. g.*—

I.

O. T.

1. G., E., L., N., D., (Pentateuch—Law).....	5 books	
2. J., J., R., 1 and 2 S., 1 and 2 K., 1 and 2 Ch., E., N., E. (History)	12 books	
3. J., Ps., Pr., Ec., S. of S. (Poetry).....	5 books	
4. Is., J. (L.), Ez., D. (Prophets—Major).....	5 books	
5. Ho., Jo., Am., Ob., Jo., Mi., Na, Ha., Ze., Ha., Ze., Ma.,	} (Prophets—Minor)12 books	
Total	39 books	

In this skeleton of the books certain things are to be observed which help children quickly to master the whole list. One is, the repetition of "fives" and "twelves." Another is, the "historical group" comprises three single letters (two of them the same), three pairs of "firsts" and "seconds," and then three single letters (again two, the same). Another aid is the anagram of the names of the Minor Prophets, first suggested by a Yale divinity professor. Pentateuch means "5-pronged." Use the fingers and thumb of one hand to illustrate.

II.

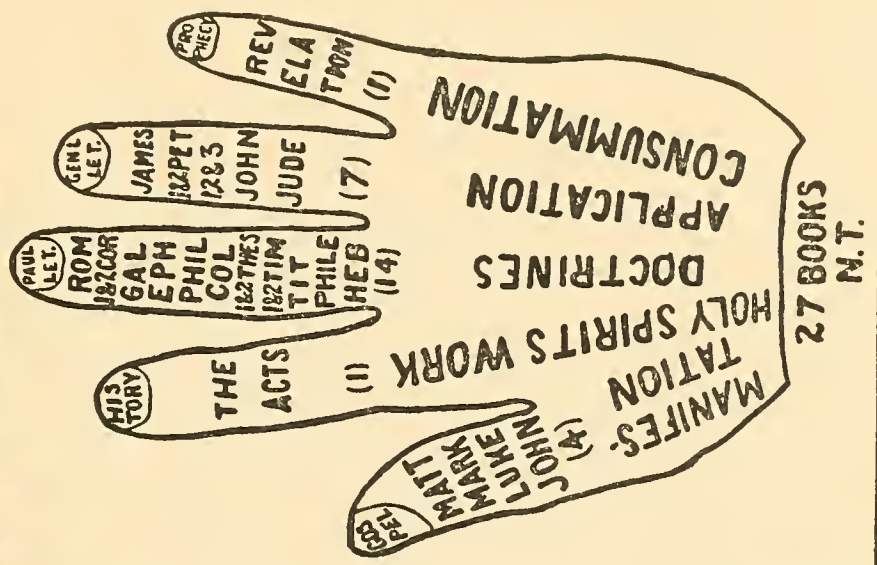
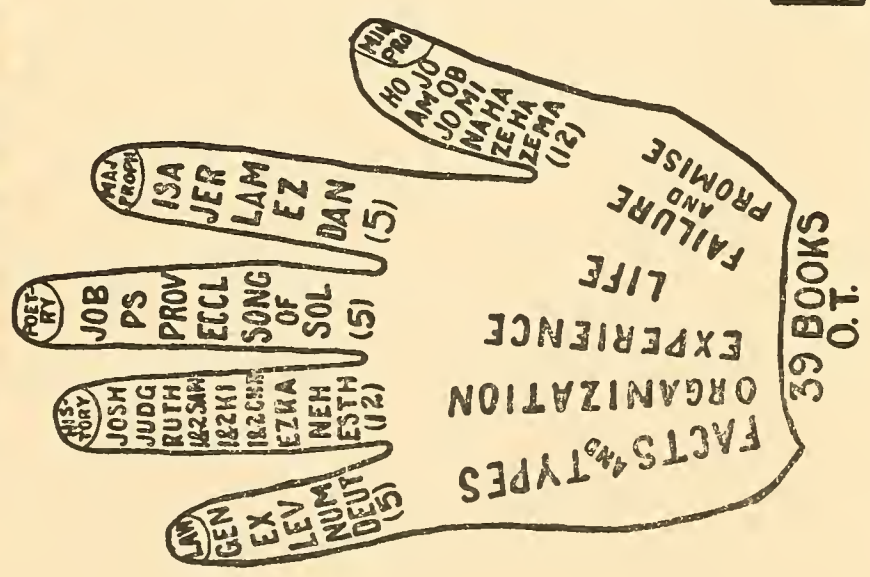
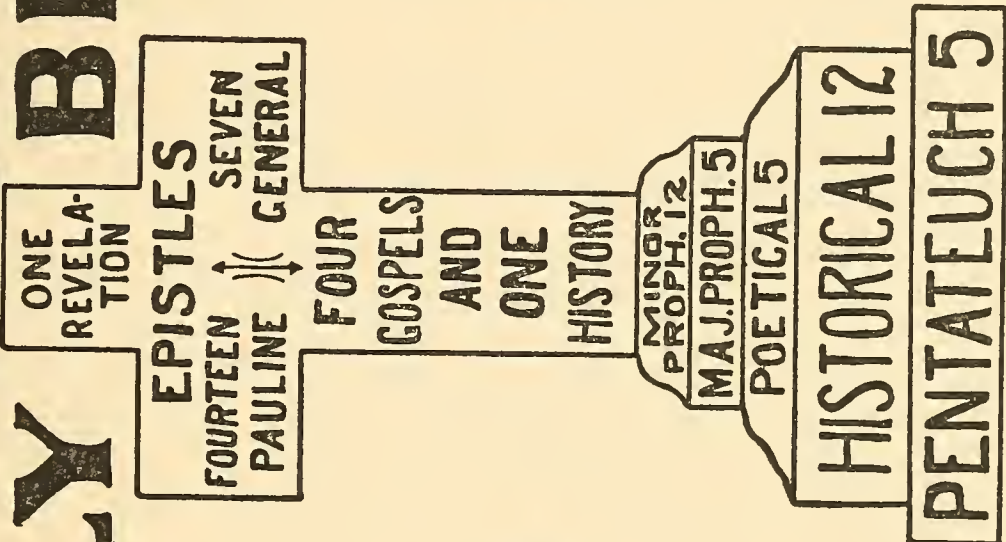
N. T.

1. Mt., Mk., L., J., A. (Historical).....	5 books
2. R., 1 and 2 Cor., G., E., P., C., 1 and 2 Thes., 1 and 2 Tim., Tit., P. (Paul's Letters).....	13 books

* Used by permission of the Reformed Board of Publication. These cards can be secured from The Lutheran Publication House, 1424 Arch Street, Philadelphia, at 50 cents a hundred, postpaid.

THE BOOK WE STUDY

HOLY THE BIBLE



3. Heb. (author unknown).....	1 book
4. Ja., 1 and 2 P., 1, 2 and 3 Jo., Ju. (General Epistles)	7 books
5. R. (Prophetical)	1 book
Total	27 books

The Pauline Epistles are difficult to master. It may help to group the first three, suggesting Rome and Greece; the next four, which replace the familiar "G. O. P." of our national cartoons with G. E. P., indicating the change by an added "C," giving us "G. E. P. C."; then follow two pairs of "firsts" and "seconds" and two single names. Hebrews stands alone. The General Epistles were written by the three "favored disciples" (James once, Peter twice, John three times) and Jude. Revelation stands alone.

QUESTIONS

1. How many books are there in the Old Testament? Name them.
2. How many books are there in the New Testament? Name them.
3. How are these books grouped in the Levin-Dechant chart?
4. How are these books grouped in the Myers' Catechism chart?
5. How may we easily remember the order of the Minor Prophets? the Pauline Epistles? the General Epistles?

LESSON III

THE CANON: AUTHORITY

I. THE CANON

1. These sixty-six books which we have been learning to know are called the **Canon**. The word Canon means "pattern" or "rule." The Bible is our "rule of faith." As such, not only does it tell us the truth of God which we are to believe and by which we are saved, but it is distinguished from all other books, particularly the *Apocrypha*.*

2. **The Old Testament Canon** was completed several hundred years before the books of the New Testament were written. Just how the Old Testament Canon was formed it would be difficult to tell. The process was a long and gradual one. There were at first smaller collections, and out of these the larger were made (cf. Deut. xxxi. 9 ff., 1 Sam. x. 25, Prov. xxv. 1). The Pentateuch was the first group, and, for a long time was all there was of the Scriptures. This is what Ezra read in the hearing of all the people (Neh. viii.). To this were added such annals of Israel's history and such portions of the prophets' writings as survived, forming the second of the great divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures. Then, finally, such "sacred writings" were gathered together as were deemed worthy to stand side by side with the Law and the Prophets. By the time of Christ there was a universal acceptance of the books we now know as the Old Testament Scriptures.

3. **The New Testament Canon.**—The Hebrew Scriptures became the Bible of the early Christian Church. Around them in the course of time gathered collections of Christian writings to which canonical authority was ultimately given. There was no intention

* The *Old Testament Apocrypha*, which in Luther's Bible stand between the Old Testament and the New Testament, are: 1 and 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Esther (parts not found in the Hebrew original), The Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, The Song of the Three Holy Children, The History of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, the Prayers of Manasses, 1 and 2 Maccabees—"books which are not of equal authority with the Scriptures, but profitable to read."

on the part of the writers to make Scripture—the reverence for the Old Testament which the Apostles inherited would have prevented such a thought. The writings were called forth by the circumstances of the Church, and only afterwards were they gathered together and invested with authority. The Epistles were written before the Gospels, but the gospel was preached before the Epistles were written. The facts of the life of Christ and their application to our salvation formed the substance of apostolic preaching. With the extension of the Church and the removal of some of the apostles, the necessity for a permanent record of these facts and truths began to press upon the apostolic circle. Luke explains how he came to write his Gospel in Luke i. 1-4. Meanwhile, the apostles had written letters to the churches they had established. In this way the materials of the New Testament were accumulated. All of the books were probably written by the close of the first century of the Christian era, but it was not until the fourth century that they were commonly accepted as Scripture.

II. AUTHORITY

1. We naturally ask, **How did these writings come to be recognized as the word of God?** They differ widely in authorship, style and time of composition. The writers were not conscious that they were contributing to a book, yet the unity of their writings is unmistakable. In what did this unity consist? There is no other answer honestly possible except that they are all in direct connection with God's historical revelation which culminated in Jesus Christ. This is the one thing that binds them together as with a golden cord. The test which Luther put to each book was—*Does it occupy itself with Christ or does it not?* He did not accept a book because it was bound up in a volume the Church believed to be inspired; but he accepted it because it brought new life to him and proved itself of God. He did not accept Christ because he found Him in this book, but he accepted the book because it testified of Christ. "Herein agree all the genuine holy books," he said, "that they all preach and exhibit Christ." Roman Catholics accept the Scriptures on the authority of the Church and its traditions; Protestants accept the Scriptures because of the witness which the Scriptures themselves bear. As Luther truly said, "The Church cannot give more force or authority to a book than it has in itself. A council cannot make that to be Scripture which in its own nature is not Scripture." Or as Dr. Robertson Smith puts it, "If I am

asked why I receive the Scriptures as the word of God, and as the only perfect rule of faith and life, I answer with all the fathers of the Protestant Church, *Because the Bible is the only record of the redeeming love of God, because in the Bible alone I find God drawing near to man in Christ Jesus, and declaring to us in Him His will for our salvation.*"

2. This test of Scripture becomes clearer when we recall **the use which Christ and the New Testament writers made of the Old Testament Scriptures.** Out of them Jesus learned His mission (Luke iv. 18-20, Matt. ix. 13). It was the prophecy and prospectus of His work; it was the law to which His life, His death and His resurrection were conformed. "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke xxiv. 27). "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me" (Luke xxiv. 44). "Thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day" (Luke xxiv. 46). Christ's example was followed by the apostles and other writers of the New Testament. They treat the Old Testament Scriptures as not only historically and prophetically true, but as fulfilled in Jesus. The distinctive use of the Old Testament in the Gospels, the Acts and the Epistles, is that the whole life of Christ is viewed in fulfillment of prophecy: *e. g., Jesus is born of a virgin in Bethlehem, and as an infant returns from Egypt to Nazareth. His public ministry is heralded by John the Baptist. He begins His work in Galilee by claiming the endowment of the Holy Spirit, and in Judea by showing His zeal for God's house. In His acts of healing He takes upon Himself the burden of men's infirmities. As befits the servant of the Lord He is humble, silent, patient. He is compelled by the stupidity of the people to speak in parables. He enters Jerusalem in lowliness, seated on an ass. He is greeted as coming in the name of the Lord. His message is not believed; He is rejected by the leaders of the people; He is betrayed for money; He is forsaken by His followers; He is reckoned among transgressors and hated without cause. His garments are divided; His bones are not broken, though His side is pierced; He is not suffered to be holden of death; He is exalted to God's right hand.*

3. **The books of the New Testament,** which are the record of the eye-witnesses of the ministry of Jesus Christ, and the words of His ac-

credited ambassadors, were **similarly received by the early Church**. They took their place in the Canon as the very word of Christ. The churches read the apostolic writings because in them they heard the voice of their Master, their supreme authority, speaking through the writer. We now accept the Canonical Scriptures because the Christian Church has accepted them as the word of God; but the decisive factor is not the Church's authority but the Church's consensus. It is the divine quality of the books and not the authority of the Church which gives the Bible its authority.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the meaning of the Canon of Scripture?
2. What Bible did Jesus have?
3. How did the books of the New Testament come to be written?
4. When was the Canon finally settled?
5. How did the Scriptures come to be recognized as one book?
6. In what does the unity of the book consist?
7. What was Luther's test of the Canon?
8. Why do Roman Catholics accept the Scriptures?
9. Why do Protestants accept the Scriptures?

LESSON IV

INSPIRATION: METHOD

I. INSPIRATION

1. When the question is asked, How are these books the word of God? the answer is, "Because they were inspired by the Holy Spirit." **Inspiration** is the human qualification by the divine Spirit for the work of making Scripture. The term comes from the Vulgate translation of 2 Tim. iii. 16, *Omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata*, "Every Scripture inspired of God." The Greek word, θεοπνευστία, means "God-breathed." "Inspired," therefore, means simply "inbreathed. by God," which may be applied to any degree of divine influence. In 2 Peter i. 21, the inspiration of "holy men of old" is described as being "moved" or "borne along" by the Holy Spirit, which seems a stronger expression than "inbreathed." But neither will help us further than this, that inspiration means divine influence. Just what this influence is we can only know from what it does. It would seem, from an examination of the Scriptures, that it might sometimes be a very ordinary matter, merely helping a man to tell more accurately and reverently than he might otherwise have done some matter he had learned by his own observation. It might sometimes, too, be a power full of marvel and mystery, enabling men to apprehend "the secret things which belong unto God." It helped one man to be a historian, another to be an editor of old documents, another to be an architect and designer, another to sing soul-stirring hymns. It touched a prophet's lips with fire to rouse a nation from its sins; it directed an apostle to write letters of wise counsel for the Church. Applied to the whole Bible, *it is the special influence of God which so guided all who took part in producing it that they made it the book God designed it to be*, unique in its religious value, authoritative and final in its religious teaching.

2. The reader of Scripture needs scarcely to be reminded that **the writers themselves claimed such inspiration**. From the Old Testament prophet, whose almost invariable announcement is: "The word of the Lord came unto —," to St. Paul whose confident as-

sertion was, "Neither did I receive it [my gospel] from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ," the claim of the writers who disclose their identity is uniform (cf. Ex. xx. 1, 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, Isa. i. 2, Jer. i. 4, Ezek. i. 3, Dan. vii. 1, ix. 21, Amos i. 1, Rev. i. 1). They themselves do not explain their inspiration, and probably could not. Could Shakespeare have explained how he was intellectually endowed with great thoughts, or how he was inspired to express his great thoughts in immortal words? We cannot tell how the human spirit can operate through the body. We cannot explain how the Holy Spirit quickens religious life in man. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."

3. We recognize that these writers who claim "to speak in the name of the Lord" and to be "filled with His Spirit" present **a revelation of whose religious goodness and profitableness there can be no question.** The conception of God they present is unique; the predictions they make are unique; the fulfillment of these predictions is unique; the Person they disclose in Jesus Christ is unique; the signs by which they attest their message and by which He attests His message are unique. In whatever way we look at it **the book is unique.** It is the book of God in a sense in which no other book is—the depository of His thoughts and purposes, a book of life and salvation. Coming forth from the little land of Palestine, it has taken hold of the world as no other book has. It has transformed pagan nations, making them humane and virtuous. It has created our noblest institutions and inspired our noblest laws. "If the Bible is not a divine book in a sense which is true of no other book, then it is the greatest paradox in its effects that the world has seen. It deceives our highest spiritual sense and yet produces our noblest spiritual character."—(*Allon.*)

II. METHOD

1. If we cannot understand the inspiration of the Bible, we can, and do, understand **its method.** The making of the Bible was not like the building of a house; it was rather like the growth of a tree. God could have given us a book let down from heaven, as the Mormons foolishly say the book of Mormon was; but that would have been to give us a book of rules, a code, but not a Bible. God's method was that of **a progressive revelation and a progressive record** of it. God did not reveal Himself all at once at the outset

of human history. If He had disclosed Himself then in all the fullness of the Bible revelation, man would have been confused and overwhelmed. God adapted Himself to the capacity of man in His disclosures of Himself. The difference between the economy of Moses and the economy of Pentecost is the difference between the kindergarten and the university.

2. God reveals Himself **first to individuals**, then to a nation. He reveals Himself first in an almost human form, talking to man as another man might talk (Gen. iii. 8). He appeared to the patriarchs in the form of an angel (Gen. xvi. 7, Gen. xviii. 1 ff., Gen. xix. 1 ff., Gen. xxxii. 24 ff., Num. xxii. 23)—a form of appearance that continued throughout revelation. He appeared to Moses in the burning bush (Ex. iii. 1 ff.). He manifested Himself to the prophets in the spiritual intuitions of their own minds. Then He manifested Himself in Jesus Christ, disclosing “the deepest and most transcendent spiritual truths, realities and mysteries of redemption” (Heb. i. 1-3). Finally, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, in order that He might take the things of Christ and show them to men, revelation became “an abiding presentation of spiritual truth” for human redemption (John xiv. 26).

3. The preparatory revelation of God was particularly disclosed in **the history of Israel**. It was necessary to prepare for the Messiah a people to be God’s witness among the nations. The Hebrew people had an aptitude for religion, a genius for apprehending deity, and a passion for righteousness. God called Israel out of Egypt, disciplined them by a forty years’ wandering in the wilderness of Sinai, and, first through ceremonial ordinances, and then through their history and its interpretation by prophets, revealed the nature and principles of His kingdom. Israel was little more than a medium through which God revealed Himself, and when, through its rebellion, it ceased to be that, it ceased to be a nation.

4. God’s mode of revealing Himself is seen also in **the names by which He is known** throughout the Bible. As Dr. Oehler says, “God names Himself, not according to what He is for Himself, but to *what He is for man*,” each new measure of disclosure being marked by a new name. Unfortunately, our English Bible does not show this as clearly as the original languages. His first name, “God” (Gen. i. 1, Heb., *El*, plural *Elohim*) is used for the creative days of the divine manifestation. God is the mighty maker of heaven and earth, who wields the forces of nature for His own ends. To the patriarchs He is “God Almighty” (Gen. xvii. 1, Heb.

El-Shaddai). From the Exodus He is "the Lord" (the unfortunate substitution in the Authorized Version for *Jehovah*, Heb. *Yahweh*, because of the Hebrew superstition as to pronouncing the divine name), "the living one," the God of deeds, who showed what He was rather by His mighty deliverances than by words of revelation; henceforth the God of human history as well as the God of nature. Then, in the New Testament, when the only-begotten Son has revealed God in His fullness, He is "Our Father" (Matt. vi. 9).

5. **The New Testament Scriptures are the record of God's full and final disclosure of Himself** for human redemption in the life and work of Jesus Christ (Heb. i. 1-3). The message of Jesus Christ to the world, the word which He received from His Father, has been preserved by the pens of His own disciples; the first and fourth Gospels were composed by apostles and eye-witnesses, the other two by direction of apostles, while the deep things of the gospel are interpreted in the epistles by the personalities they so powerfully molded. For, "to know Christ fully, we must not only know what He said and did Himself, but also what He made of the men who fully surrendered themselves to His grace and truth." He uses the mind of John and the soul of Paul and the practical wisdom of James to bring to light the hidden treasures that were in Himself. It has been well said that revelation would not be complete without some such soul experience as that of the apostle Paul's. "Beyond all doubt, without St. Paul's interpretation of the relation of Christ to sin, law, death, grace and life, the revelation of God in Christ would not have been complete." These are, doubtless, some of the truths which Christ could not fully disclose to His disciples, because they could not bear them, but into which the Spirit of truth led them.

QUESTIONS

1. How are these books of Scripture the word of God?
2. What is inspiration?
3. Did the writers themselves claim inspiration?
4. How does the Bible testify in its own behalf?
5. What is God's method of revelation as shown in the Bible?
6. How did He first reveal Himself?

7. What was the next stage of His revelation?
8. What is the significance of the names by which He is known?
9. What is God's method of revelation in the New Testament?
10. What is the value of Paul's experience?

LESSON V

THE PENTATEUCH: GENESIS

(Gen. i.-xi.)

1. **Name.** The first five books of the Bible are called the **Pentateuch**, the five-volumed book. Its common Hebrew designation is "*the Law*" (Josh. i. 7), or more fully "*the book of the law*" (Josh. viii. 34), "*the book of the law of Moses*" (Josh. viii. 31), "*the book of the law of God*" (Josh. xxiv. 26), "*the book of the law of Jehovah*" (2 Chron. xvii. 9), "*the law of Moses*" (1 Kings ii. 3). Though Law, from its Hebrew root, means instruction, in the passages quoted, and in similar passages, the word is used in the restricted sense of law. The entire Pentateuch is called "the law" because legislation forms so large an element in it. In post-biblical times the Jews called it "*the five-fifths of the law*" or simply "*the fifths*." In the New Testament it is called "*the book of the law*" (Gal. iii. 10), "*the book of Moses*" (Mark xii. 26), "*the law of Jehovah*" (Luke ii. 23), "*the law of Moses*" (Luke ii. 22), and "*the law*" (Matt. xii. 5). Many scholars now add the book of Joshua to the Pentateuch and call the whole the Hexateuch. Others add Judges, Samuel and Kings, making a Heptateuch or an Octateuch. However, the name Pentateuch will not soon be displaced.

2. **Author.** Though the Pentateuch does not clearly state that it was all the work of Moses, Moses is explicitly said to have written many things contained in these books (cf. Ex. xvii. 14; xxiv. 4, 7; xxxiv. 27; Num. xxxiii. 1, 2; Deut. xxxi. 9-11, 22, 24-26; Josh. i. 7, 8; viii. 31, 34; xxiii. 6; xxiv. 26). The later books of the Old Testament uniformly speak of the book of Moses (Josh. viii. 30-35, Judges iii. 4, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14, Ezra iii. 2, etc.). Jesus quotes passages of the Pentateuch as from Moses (Matt. viii. 4, Luke v. 14, Mark x. 5). The testimony of the New Testament writers is unanimous for the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (Acts iii. 22, Rom. x. 5, 19, 1 Cor. ix. 9, etc.).

3. The chief historical book of the Pentateuch is **Genesis**, the first book in the Bible. Genesis is a Greek name, signifying *origin* or

genealogy. It is the book of *beginnings*, and in it we find the beginnings of the world, of life, of man, of sin, of salvation, of the chosen people. Its contents fall naturally into two great divisions: (1) *primeval history* (chapters i. to xi.), and (2) *patriarchal history* (xii. to the end).

4. **Primeval history.** (a) *Creation*. "In the beginning God created" may be taken as the prologue of the chronicle of beginnings. The beginning of the universe is first stated (Gen. i. 1). Then, in order, we have the successive acts of creation, making up the six days of God's creative work.

1. Separation of Light from Darkness. Vs. 2-5.	4. Lights in the Heaven, Sun, Moon and Stars. Vs. 14-19.
2. Creation of the Firmament. Vs. 6-8.	5. Animal Life in Water and Air. Vs. 20-23.
3. Separation of Land from Water. Vs. 9-13.	6. Higher Animals on the Land. Creation of Man. Vs. 24, 25.

AFTER DELITZSCH.

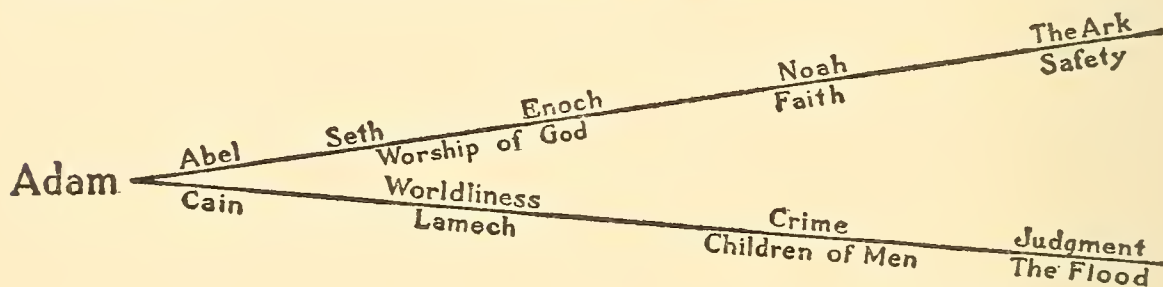
Then follows the more explicit story of the creation of man (i. 26-28) and the institution of the Sabbath (ii. 1-3). A second account of creation follows in ii. 4-7, the preparation of the garden (ii. 8-17), the creation of woman (ii. 18-23).

(b) *Man's sin and its consequences*. Chapter iii. gives us the beginning of temptation (1-5), the first sin (6), the effects of sin (7, 8), the curse (14-19), and the protevangel (15). In the working out of this promise, to be finally realized in Christ, two lines of men arise. One follows Cain, the murderer, through Lamech and his descendants; the other, Abel, through Seth, men of faith (iv. 16 to v.).

It is worthy of note that the creation story and the story of Edenic happiness and its loss through yielding to *external* temptation have been found among the Babylonians and other oriental peoples, but only the Genesis narrative is monotheistic and spiritual in its lessons.

(c) *Other Beginnings.* We have in Genesis also the beginning of the family (i. 27, 28, iv. 1), the beginning of worship (iv. 3, 4, 26), of city life (iv. 17), of polygamy (iv. 19), of nomads (iv. 20), of musicians (iv. 21), of metal workers (iv. 22), of vine culture (ix. 20), of drunkenness (ix. 21).

(d) *The Flood.* The corruption which had become so great in the line of Cain became all but universal when the two races, that of Cain and that of Seth, began to intermarry (vi.). The moral darkness of the Cainites now overspread the entire horizon. The wickedness of men was very great on the earth. The course of the human race to this point may be represented thus:



AFTER PELOUBET.

All the human family but Noah and his family perished in the flood, which was God's first universal judgment (vii., viii.). Flood stories are common in oriental literature, but only that of Genesis points out the way of salvation.

(e) *Babel.* The world is repopulated through the family of Noah. From his sons the great divisions of men and nations descend, Japheth being the traditional father of the Aryan race; Ham, of the Turanian, and Shem of the Semitic (ix., x.). The genealogical table, which seems to be geographical, shows the place of Israel in the family of the nations. The writer's goal is the history of the chosen family. He is chiefly concerned with the generations of Shem. In chapter xi. the genealogy carries us down through ten generations from Shem to Abraham, and is repeated exactly in 1 Chron. i. 24-27 and in Luke iii. 34-36, with a slight interpolation. The story of the tower of Babel explains how the human family was scattered and how diversity of language arose (xi.). This is the third great beginning chronicled in Genesis.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the Pentateuch? Who wrote it?
2. What does "Genesis" mean?
3. What beginnings do we find in Genesis?
4. What is the order of the creative week?
5. What was the beginning of sin?
6. What is the *protevangel*?
7. What was the first universal judgment?
8. What was the beginning of the diversity of language?
9. What is the significance of the genealogical table of Genesis?

LESSON VI

PATRIARCHAL HISTORY

(Gen. xii.-l.)

Places: Mesopotamia, Canaan, Egypt.

A new chapter in Bible history begins at Genesis xii. 1. Hebrew tradition told how the ancestors of the nation had, under the divine guidance, migrated from the distant East into Canaan; had sojourned in different parts of the land; had entered into various relations, friendly and unfriendly, with the native inhabitants, and had, in the end, in the person of Jacob and his twelve sons, gone down into Egypt. Gen. xii.-l. is the historical record of it. But it is more. It is a record of the relation which existed between the Patriarchs and God. Jehovah draws near to them in love, chooses them for His service, blesses them with His favor, enriches them with His promises, binds them with His behests. They are taken into covenant with God, justified by faith, disciplined by trial, perfected through suffering. The book records the failures as well as the victories of these men of God, for its purpose is not hero-worship, but religious instruction.

1. **Patriarchal history begins with Abraham.** Since Noah the line of Shem had been that in which the knowledge of the true God had been perpetuated, and now, in the person of Abraham, this knowledge was to become the covenant possession of a chosen people. Abraham was the recipient of this divine preferment. Responding in faith to the call he left his home in "Ur of the Chaldees," far down in Mesopotamia, and set out for the new land of promise (xii. 1 ff.). At Haran, 500 or 600 miles from Ur, he tarried till the death of his father, Terah. He entered the land from the north and built altars to the Lord at Shechem and Bethel. At Shechem God gave him a special promise that he and his seed should inherit the land (xii. 7, cf. xiii. 15, 17; xv. 18; xxvi. 3; xxviii. 13). Famine drove him into Egypt, where he was guilty of a lapse of faith. On his return from Egypt at Bethel he was separated from Lot, his nephew, yielding

first choice of the land to him (xiii.), and when Lot had been carried off by the four confederate kings (xiv. 1)* Abraham appeared in the character of a man of arms, defeating those powerful allies with a handful of followers (xiv. 13-16). After this experience, which includes the meeting with Melchizedek, God appeared to Abraham in a new vision (xv.), giving him the promise, "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward."

2. Hitherto Abraham had been the recipient of promises and blessings, and it seemed as if he must soon receive the promised seed. But now various **delays, hindrances and disappointments** intervene, in overcoming which evidence is given both of the strength of his faith and of the Providence watching over him. The chief of these delays was the substitution of Ishmael for the true heir (xvi.). The chapter tells how the impatience of three people conspired to thwart the divine plan—Hagar, beset by her jealous mistress; Sarah, despairing of the fulfillment of Jehovah's promise, and Abraham, losing faith in a difficult situation. Ishmael, the Arab, could not take his place in the line of Israel's spiritual patriarchs. Thirteen years after the birth of Ishmael God appeared to Abraham renewing His assurance that he and his seed would inherit the land of Canaan, and establishing a covenant with him for all time that He would be his God and the God of his descendants (xvii. 1-8). Circumcision was instituted as the sign of the covenant,† and Abram's name was changed (xvii. 9-14).

3. **The supreme test of Abraham's faith** was when he received the command to offer his son Isaac to God in sacrifice. The custom

* We have here one of the few clues to chronology from external sources. Amraphel has been generally identified as the great Hammurabi, the sixth king of the first dynasty of Babylon, whose date, from contemporary records, has been located as early as 2100 B. C. (cf. "Light on the Old Testament from Babel," Clay, page 130). Driver places his date at 2250 B. C. ("The Book of Genesis," Westminster Commentaries). That would make the exodus about 1600 B. C.). But this could not be reconciled with Ussher's date for Solomon (1014-975 B. C.). It is impossible to hold to Ussher's chronology and the identity of Amraphel and Hammurabi. Many scholars, however, doubt this identity. On the other hand, inscriptions of Arioch also have been found. These facts are mentioned to show the teacher how impossible it is to be dogmatic about Bible dates. The chronology of the Bible is not a matter of divine revelation. Abraham's date is now usually placed about 2000 B. C.

† Circumcision did not originate with the Hebrews, it being extensively practiced in different parts of the ancient world, particularly in Egypt. Its significance in Israel is twofold: (1) It was performed *in infancy*; (2) it was made a religious rite.

of human sacrifice was widespread in the ancient world. Excavations at Gezer show that human sacrifice, particularly of children, was practiced in Canaan. It was natural for Abraham, therefore, to recognize the command to sacrifice Isaac as from the Lord. Dr. Schauffler is probably right when he infers that God's purpose was to teach Abraham two things by this command: "First, that all human sacrifices were abhorrent to God; and second, that his obedience must be unquestioning. God never intended that Isaac should be sacrificed. This is apparent from the whole narrative. His command was a 'test' of the patriarch, a test which Abraham met grandly."

4. Abraham provided a wife for his son Isaac from his own people—Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel—and, having finished his pilgrimage, at the age of one hundred and seventy-five, he was gathered to his fathers. His sons, Ishmael and Isaac, buried him beside Sarah in the cave of **Machpelah**. Here also were buried Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah (xxv. 9; xlix. 30; l. 13). The most remarkable thing in his history was the promise given him respecting the Messiah (xii. 3 and xxii. 18), and the most remarkable thing in his character was his *faith* (xv. 6 and Heb. xi. 8, 17). Our Lord expressed all by saying, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it, and was glad" (John viii. 56).

QUESTIONS

1. What countries are included in the patriarchal history?
2. With whom does this history begin?
3. Where was Abraham born?
4. How did he enter Canaan?
5. What promise did Jehovah give him?
6. What delayed the fulfillment of the promise?
7. In whom was the promise fulfilled?
8. What sign of the covenant was instituted?
9. What was the supreme trial of Abraham's faith?
10. What did God design to teach Abraham by this trial?
11. Where is Abraham buried?
12. What is the keynote of Abraham's character?

LESSON VII

PATRIARCHAL HISTORY.—CONTINUED

(Gen. xxv.-l.)

Place: Canaan.

1. The second half of the patriarchal story contains “**the generations**” of Ishmael (xxv. 12), of Isaac (xxv. 18), of Esau (xxxvi. 1, 9), and of Jacob (xxxvii. 2). These generations were the family histories. The sons of Ishmael and of Esau, the Arabs and the Edomites, did little to further the providential purpose of God, the education and salvation of the human race. The line of promise is through Isaac and his son Jacob.

2. The events of **Isaac’s life** are far less interesting than those of Abraham’s or Jacob’s. There is the same strife about the wells with Abimelech, king of Gerar, that his father had; the wanderings in search of pasture, or under pressure of famine; the usual cunning or dissimulation to avoid danger. But no great events happen in his lifetime. He exemplifies the domestic virtues and is the hero of conjugal fidelity. Of all the patriarchs he alone stood aloof from polygamy, so that the liturgy of the Christian Church enshrines him in her prayers as the ideal of a faithful husband.

3. The story of **Jacob** is one of the romances of the Old Testament. Esau and Jacob, the children of prayer, were contrasts from the first. That the wary, home-loving Jacob—the epitome of the traits of his race—should secure from his careless and more roving brother the coveted birthright, is not a surprise (xxvii.). But the ill-gotten gain proved no blessing in fact. He became a fugitive from his native land and never again saw his mother’s face. But his flight made an epoch in his life. It brought him to Bethel and the heavenly vision (xxviii.). But he must endure the discipline of Haran, the land of his ancestors (xxix.). Here he struggled with his uncle, Laban, served for his wives, Leah and Rachel, and after twenty years of unrequited service stealthily departed with his gains (xxxi.). As yet, however, his character was unchanged. Not until after he had wrestled with the angel of Jehovah and yielded to the divine Spirit did he become **Israel**, a prince with

God (xxvii. 25-27). After his reconciliation with Esau he returned to Canaan, settling at Shechem, the shrine of Abraham, which he purchased from the children of Hamor (xxxiii.). Thence, to prevent intermarriage with the Canaanites on the part of his children, he passed, first to Bethel, where the foreign gods were banished from his household, and Jehovah again appeared to him (xxxiv.). Then he pressed still further south. Near Bethlehem (Ephrath) Rachel died in childbirth when Benjamin was born (xxxv.). Through his wives, Leah and Rachel, and their handmaids, Bilhah and Zilpah, the twelve tribes of Israel are reckoned to have descended (xxxv. 23-27):

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Reuben | 7. Gad |
| 2. Simeon | 8. Asher |
| 3. Levi | 9. Issachar |
| 4. Judah | 10. Zebulun |
| 5. Dan | 11. Joseph |
| 6. Naphtali | 12. Benjamin |

6. The stream of sacred history now follows the life of **Joseph**. A remarkable combination of gifts and graces met in his character. Unusually beloved by his father, he became the object of envy to his brethren because of his father's preferment and his own high dreams of power (xxxvii. 6). He was sold away from his father by his brethren as a slave (xxxvii. 26). The slave boy received high place (xxxix.). Temptation sought him, but he conquered, only to be imprisoned by lying, lustful hate (xxxix.). In prison God raised up friends for him. Dreams, which he interpreted, at last led him to the Pharaoh's presence (xl.). There he interpreted the Pharaoh's dreams so clearly and advised so prudently that he was elevated to a high and responsible position (xli.). One day, after many years, he suddenly saw his brethren, forced by necessity, standing before him; but he used his advantage, not to crush them or take vengeance upon them, but to *test* them, to discover whether they were loyal to his father and his younger brother, and when he was satisfied on this point, he saved them, and, in loving affection, sent for his father (xlii. to xlv.). To Egypt Jacob came, and there he dwelt (xlvi., xlvii.); there also he died, with many prophetic blessings for his sons (xlviii., xlix.), seeing the hope to come (the Prince of Peace) in Judah (xlix. 10). In Egypt Israel prospered so long as Joseph lived (xlix., 1.).

QUESTIONS

1. With what is the second half of the book of Genesis occupied?
2. Through whom do we now trace the line of promise?
3. What is the main characteristic of Isaac's life?
4. What contrast is presented by Jacob and Esau?
5. Trace the career of Jacob.
6. How did Jacob become a prince with God?
7. Name the twelve sons of Jacob.
8. Tell the story of Joseph.

LESSON VIII

THE EXODUS AND SINAI

(Books: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)

Places: Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula, the land of Moab.

1. **Israel in Egypt.** In the four hundred and thirty years of their sojourn in Egypt (Ex. xii. 40, Gal. iii. 17) Israel increased enormously in numbers, but Joseph's services were forgotten, and the foreign shepherds were an abomination. The Pharaoh,* alarmed at the growth of the Hebrews, and, perhaps, fearing that they might ally themselves with some foreign invader, resolved to cripple and crush them by oppression (Ex. i. 11 ff.). Unable to accomplish his end by oppression, he endeavored, at first secretly and afterwards openly, to destroy their male children. They were to be cast into the Nile.

2. **Moses.** The evasion of this order on the part of a Levite and his wife led to the discovery by the Pharaoh's daughter of him who was to be the future deliverer of Israel. Moses, the son of Amram and Jochebed, is by far the greatest man in Old Testament history. The existence and character of the Hebrew nation require such a

* Scholars generally believe that the Pharaoh of the oppression was Rameses II., of the nineteenth dynasty, who reigned sixty-seven years, and is known from Egyptian monuments to have erected extensive works, such as are mentioned in Ex. i. 11. Rameses II. had more than one hundred children, the thirteenth or fourteenth of whom succeeded him, in the person of Merenpthah, who may have been the Pharaoh of the Exodus, which, in that case must be placed at about 1213 B. C. This date, however, does not allow for the 480 years of 1 Kings vi. 1 between the Exodus and the building of the temple (1015 B. C.), and, on the other hand, leaves too much time between the dates of Abraham and the Exodus. The 480 years would bring us back to the reign of Thothmes III. "What is known of that monarch and his time agrees with the Bible record. The picture of brick-making by captives, bearing the inscription, 'Be not idle,' is from his reign. . . . According to this theory the Khabiri of the Tel-el-Amarna letters may have been the hosts of Israel who were threatening to overthrow the king of Jerusalem." These facts are too meager to decide between these two theories, but they corroborate the Bible account. The tendency now is toward the earlier dates.

person as Moses to account for them. His life falls into three natural divisions of forty years each: (1) at the Pharaoh's court; (2) as a shepherd in the desert; (3) in the wilderness as the leader of Israel. His services to his people will be best understood by following his work (1) as Leader and (2) as Lawgiver and Prophet.

I. MOSES, THE LEADER

1. For his work as leader Moses was **trained in two schools**; first, in the Pharaoh's household (Ex. ii. 5 ff.), where he became "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and mighty in words and deeds" (Acts vii. 22). His life at the Egyptian court came to a sudden end through his patriotic effort to deliver one of his countrymen from the cruelty of an Egyptian. His choice of his people and his renunciation of Egyptian favor and preferment were the triumphs of faith (Heb. xi. 24-26). His forty years' experience in the desert brought him near to nature's heart, and prepared him to receive the divine call which came in the form of a new name of God, the giving of which marks an epoch in the history of Israel and of mankind (Ex. iii. 14).

2. Moses' actual leadership began with his **contest with the Pharaoh** when he presented God's word that he should let His people go (Ex. v. 1 ff.). The plagues followed as a result of the Pharaoh's obstinacy (vii. to x.). By nine powerful miracles Moses showed the power of his God, in vindication of his appeal. Still the Pharaoh hardened his heart, until God finally hardened him in judgment, and the slaying of the first-born of the Egyptians and the institution of **the Passover** of the Jews (xx. 1-36), which is still observed by them, but which has its true fulfillment in Christ (1 Cor. v. 7), followed.

3. Six hundred thousand men,* without counting women and children, were marshaled and marched from Rameses to Succoth, thence to Etham on the edge of the wilderness, and thence to Pi-ha-hiroth, near the shore of **the Red Sea**. Their guide was the miraculous pillar of cloud and fire. Pursued by the Egyptians, they were miraculously delivered by a strong east wind, which drove back the

* This large number of fighting men has proved a stumbling-block to many Bible students. It would involve a total population of 3,000,000 souls. It is possible that the original word for "thousand," which is the same root as the word for "family," is to be taken in the latter sense in the numberings of the people in Num. i. and xxvi. This would greatly reduce the number of armed men.

waters of the sea and laid bare a passage for their crossing. The Egyptian host, attempting to follow them, was drowned. In the third month afterward the children of Israel reached Sinai, under the shadow of whose crags they spent a year, and there a new epoch in their history began.

II. MOSES AS LAWGIVER AND PROPHET

We now come to the kernel and core of Israel's life—the covenant by which all the tribes were united in allegiance to one God, and the laws—moral, social, ceremonial—upon which the covenant was based. Israel was a very small nation, and when they reached Canaan, they occupied, in their most prosperous days, a very small territory. But they have left an indelible mark on the history of the world, because they contained a germ out of which grew the kingdom of God. And that germ was planted at Sinai. It consisted in the theocracy which God established “in the third month” after the Exodus and in His election of Israel as the nation through which redemption was to be prepared and of which the Messiah was to come. In line with this purpose God gave to Moses the fundamental law by which Israel was to be bound to Him. First and highest was the *Moral Law*, which we call the Ten Commandments, providing for holiness of life. These Commandments are found in Exodus xx. and in Deuteronomy v.* At Sinai were communicated also the *Ceremonial* and *Judicial Laws* which were to govern Israel in their new relation to God as His people. The Judicial Laws are comprised chiefly in the so-called Book of the Covenant (Ex. xx. 18 to xxiv. 8); the Ceremonial Laws are to be found in various parts of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. The laws of Israel as given by Moses have been classified under four heads, viz.: 1. The Ten Words; 2. The Book of the Covenant; 3. Levitical Codes; 4. The Deuteronomic Code.

QUESTIONS

1. How long were the children of Israel in Egypt?
2. What was their condition there?
3. Who was raised up to deliver them?

* The two versions differ chiefly in the reasons assigned for the keeping of the Sabbath, the former giving the religious reason and the latter the social. In the numbering of the Commandments our Church, with the Roman Catholic, follows the divisions of the Massoretic text.

4. What preparation did he have for his work?
5. Describe his contest with the Pharaoh.
6. When was the Passover instituted?
7. What occurred at the Red Sea? at Sinai?
8. How are the laws given by Moses classified?
9. Where are the Ten Commandments recorded?
10. Where are the Ceremonial and Judicial Laws of Israel recorded?

LESSON IX

THE WILDERNESS WANDERINGS

(Books: Numbers and Deuteronomy)

In consequence of the establishment of the covenant God designed to make His dwelling with His people. To this end the tabernacle was to be erected. But before this was carried out the people broke the covenant.

1. **The First Breach of the Covenant.** When Moses was called up into the mountain he left Aaron and the elders in the plain below to await his return. Moses' prolonged absence proved too severe a test for the people. They wished a visible symbol of deity, and, recalling the impressive ritual of Egypt, they forced Aaron into the incident of the golden calf (Ex. xxxii.), a pure act of idolatry in direct violation of the law they had just received. Moses executed judgment upon the idolaters, and the tribe of Levi, by its zeal for Jehovah, obtained its consecration. Through Moses' intercession the people were pardoned and they received a new disclosure of the mercy of their God, who renewed His covenant (Ex. xxxiv.-xxxvi.).

2. **The Sojourn at Sinai.** The children of Israel remained at Sinai a year (Num. x. 11). During this time the tabernacle was set up and dedicated, and a number of laws were given designed more fully to separate the people from the practices of Egypt and of the tribes of Canaan to which they were going. (Here the Book of Leviticus, which is a handbook for priests, is to be studied, and the Book of Numbers as far as x. 11). A numbering of the people was taken, and the order of the camp of Israel was established (Num. ii. and iii.). Here also occurred the disobedience of Nadab and Abihu, two of the sons of Aaron, who, disregarding the divine order, put "strange fire" in their censers when they went to perform the priests' office (Lev. x.).

3. **Kadesh-Barnea.** In the second year the children of Israel, led by the pillar of cloud and of fire, removed from Sinai and proceeded towards the promised land. Their journey lay through the wilderness, by a route we cannot now trace, until they came to

Kadesh-Barnea on the outskirts of the land of Edom. From this point the land of promise was surveyed by spies, but on their report the courage of the people failed and they openly resolved to return to Egypt (Num. xiv.). As a punishment they were doomed to wander for forty years in the desert, and, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua, the two faithful spies, all above twenty years of age who had come out of Egypt, perished without seeing the promised land.

4. The Wandering. The history of the Pentateuch does not give us a clear account of the next thirty-seven years. According to Deuteronomy i. 46 the children of Israel abode in Kadesh many days. From this point the return march was by the stages given in Num. xxxiii. All attempts to identify these sites have proven equally unsatisfactory. In the first month of the fortieth year the children of Israel are again at Kadesh-Barnea. It is doubtless this encampment which is referred to in Num. xx. 1. As the Edomites refused Israel passage through their territory, Israel had to turn back a second time from the border of Canaan and go around the mountains of Edom in order to enter from the eastern side (Num. xx. 14 ff.). The great disappointment of the people caused them to lapse into their old rebellion, which brought upon them the plague of fiery serpents; but the spirit of the new generation was much improved and they were soon brought to repentance (Num. xxi.).

5. The Conquests. Having gone around by the Red Sea (Num. xxi. 14) the host of Israel now advanced along the eastern side of Mount Seir. They seem to have been allowed to advance quietly in this way around the eastern borders of both Edom and Moab and to have met with no interruption until they were confronted by Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, both of whom in turn they subdued. They now encamped in the plains of Moab opposite Jericho (Num. xxi. 35). The Moabites alone remained in their way. Balak, king of Moab, sought to conjure away the danger by means of Balaam, the seer of Mesopotamia, and arrest the progress of the people by means of his curse; but the Spirit of Jehovah compelled Balaam to bless Israel and announce their future glory (Num. xxiv.). But though Balaam could not destroy the children of Israel with a curse he was ingenious enough to show Balak that Israel could not resist the lures of Baal-peor. Israel's weakness, therefore, brought on the curse which Balaam was powerless to pronounce, and twenty-four thousand perished (Num. xxxi.).

6. The Last Services of Moses. The last public services of Moses were the defeat of the Midianites, the settlement of the tribes of Reuben, Gad and a half tribe of Manasseh in the conquered territory, and the establishment of the cities of refuge (xxxii.-xxxv.). The new numbering of the people showed fewer fighting men than when Israel left Egypt (601,730 against 603,500, Num. xxvi.).

7. Deuteronomy. The wanderings of the children of Israel are now at an end, and Moses is to place the staff of leadership in Joshua's hands. The last message of the departing leader is given in Deuteronomy. As the children were gathered in the plain of Moab, Moses delivered a series of orations which review the past with its experiences and lessons and again inculcate the law. "An essential peculiarity of the book is that it presents the subjective side of the law which had been brought forward in earlier books; wherefore the tone of speech is here more that of paternal warning, which, by pointing to Jehovah's electing and long-suffering love, endeavors to awaken love to Him in return" (Deut. vii. 6-8, x. 15).

QUESTIONS

1. What was the first breach of the covenant on the part of the children of Israel?
2. How long were the children of Israel at Sinai?
3. What was the purpose of this long sojourn?
4. To what place did Israel come in the second year?
5. What was the people's response to the report of the spies?
6. When did Israel come to Kadesh-Barnea again?
7. How did they finally proceed to the promised land?
8. What conquests did they make east of the Jordan?
9. What is the story of Balaam?
10. What is the significance of Deuteronomy?

LESSON X

JOSHUA AND THE SETTLEMENT OF THE LAND

(Book: Joshua)

Places: Moab, Gilead, Bashan, Canaan.

The Historical Books is the general title given to the books of *Joshua*, *Judges*, *Samuel* and *Kings*. *Chronicles* came later, being not simply a supplement of the foregoing, but a series of *annals* with a form and purpose of its own. In the series from Genesis to Second Kings each book takes up the history where the preceding book drops it; so that in this group of books we have one continuous history from the Creation to the Babylonian Captivity. *Chronicles*, on the other hand, is complete in itself, and covers the whole history from Adam down to the Restoration from captivity, and even later.

Four main periods in Israel's history are comprised in the historical books:

- (a) The invasion of Canaan under *Joshua*.
- (b) The struggle for the mastery under the *Judges*.
- (c) The rise of the monarchy under *Samuel*.
- (d) The history of the kingdoms until the extinction of the *Kings*.

1. **Joshua** first commands our notice. The **conquest of the promised land** (i. to xii.) and the **division of the land** (xiii. to xxii.) are the main contents of the book of Joshua. The death of Moses seemed an irreparable loss, but God had been training his successor. Under Joshua, Israel became a militant host, but their arms were not carnal. "No mention is made of sword, spear or bow, but only of obedience." The incidents are very thrilling in the first part of the book. In rapid succession we follow the events of the conquest. By a miracle the Jordan was crossed by Israel on dry ground at a point near the city of Jericho, two spies being sent in advance to examine the land (ii.-iv.). Jericho was the key to the occupation of Canaan from the point of crossing, and it was destroyed by divine command (v., vi.). From the Jordan the natural gateway to the land was through the wady Suweinit, which leads

into the vale of Michmash. In this valley lay the city of Ai, which Joshua captured after the Israelites had first suffered a repulse on account of the sin of Achan (vii. 1, viii. 1-29). This victory seems to have given Joshua possession of central Palestine, for immediately we find him at Mount Ebal assembling the people for the reading of the Law of Moses (viii. 30-35). A coalition of petty kings attempted to check the advance of the Hebrews, but the Canaanite forces were completely overwhelmed at Bethhoron (x.). A more powerful confederacy under Jabin, king of Hazor, in the north was similarly overthrown at Merom. Joshua did not conquer all the land (xii. 1), nor are all his campaigns recorded. The narrator is more particular to make it clear that the war is a *holy* war, for he tells of the miraculous crossing of the Jordan (iii.), the observance of the Passover (v. 10, 11), the cause of the repulse at Ai (vii.), and relates the confirming of the Covenant at Ebal and Gerizim (viii. 30-35).

2. **The division of the land** is told in detail (xiii. 15 to xxii.). **Reuben, Gad** and a **half** of the tribe of **Manasseh** were assigned territory east of the Jordan, Reuben occupying the land of Moab, Gad that of Gilead, and Manasseh that of Bashan. On the western side of the Jordan the first allotment of territory was made to the tribe of **Judah**. It included all the country south of Jerusalem from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea, an area of about 2000 square miles. Out of this allotment a part was afterwards taken for **Simeon**, to the southwest. The portion of **Benjamin** lay immediately to the north of Judah. The territory of **Dan** adjoined Benjamin on the west. The tribe of **Joseph**—usually designated as **Ephraim** and **Manasseh** (the other half tribe)—was given a large and exceptionally rich portion of territory north of the inheritance of Benjamin and Dan. To the tribe of **Issachar** was given nearly the whole plain of Esdraelon. To **Zebulon** was assigned the territory northwest of the allotment of Issachar, the inheritance of **Asher** and of **Naphtali** lying north of it. In the period of the Judges a large part of the tribe of Dan moved northward to the headwaters of the Jordan.

3. **Cities of Refuge.** Moses had directed (Num. xxxv. 6-34) that six cities—three on the eastern side and three on the western side of the Jordan—of those given to the Levites should be cities of refuge, whither those who had unintentionally killed anyone might flee. Under Joshua these cities were now set apart: on the western side, Kedesh in Naphtali, Shechem in Ephraim, and Hebron in

Judah; on the eastern side, Bezer in Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead, and Golan in Manasseh.

4. **Joshua's Farewell.** When the land was finally settled and Israel had rest from all her enemies Joshua assembled the heads of all the tribes at Shechem and delivered to them his memorable farewell. It was an affectionate appeal that, in view of the divine guidance and deliverance of their fathers, and the many mercies which had attended their way from Egypt, they would fear Jehovah and serve only Him. The people vowed again and again that they would never forsake their God, but Joshua, knowing their fickleness, swore them to fidelity by a solemn covenant (xxiii., xxiv.).

QUESTIONS

1. What are the chief historical books?
2. What are the main epochs covered in their history?
3. In what order was the land of Canaan subjugated?
4. Where did the several tribes settle?
5. What were the cities of refuge? Name them.
6. Give the argument of Joshua's farewell address.

LESSON XI

THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES

(Book: Judges)

The book of **Judges** takes its name from the men who were raised up to deliver Israel in the uncertain and more or less disorganized days of the period following Joshua. It covers a period of several centuries (cf. 1 K. vi. 1). "They are called Judges, primarily because they judged Israel in the sense of defending the national cause against enemies, and for the same reason they are called 'saviours' (iii. 9, 15, R. V.)." During the lifetime of Joshua and Phinehas, who succeeded Eleazar as high priest, an attempt was made to carry on the government in accordance with the provisions of the law of Moses, but after the death of Phinehas the theocratic polity of Israel disappeared and the individual tribes seem to conduct their own affairs. In this general confusion and disorganization the children of Israel were not in position to offer very strong resistance to invading foes, and they were further weakened by their sins. Political disorganization was the result of religious declension. The general trend of history during the time of the Judges was this: Israel would sin, and then God would allow the foes over whom they had not yet prevailed, to rule over them. Then Israel would repent and call on the God of their fathers for deliverance. "Nevertheless the Lord raised up Judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them" (ii. 16). But the repentance was usually short-lived, and the death of the judge would be followed by the return of the people to idolatry (ii. 18). In times of peace the chief function of the judge was to administer justice, but in times of war he was the militant leader of the fighting men, whom he led to victory.

2. The **book** is divided into **three parts**: (1) Introductory material (i.-iii. 5), designed to connect the book with Joshua; (2) the narratives of the judges (iii. 8 to xvi. 3); (3) two incidents of the times (xvii.-xxi.). Six of the exploits of the judges are given in detail, arising out of six invasions.

(1) *Invasion from the northwest.* The first chastisement of the children of Israel came from Mesopotamia, not many years after the death of Joshua. The people had been marrying into heathen families and combining the worship of heathen gods with the worship of Jehovah. A king of Mesopotamia, whose name was Cushan-rishathaim (which might be translated, "Cushan, the double-dyed villain"), invaded the land. For eight years he oppressed Israel, until **Othniel**, the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, was raised up and delivered Israel (iii. 7-11).

(2) *Invasion from the southeast.* The land had rest for forty years, or during the life of Othniel. But after his death, God sent Eglon, the king of Moab, who captured Jericho and afflicted Israel for eighteen years. When Israel again repented, **Ehud**, the son of Gera, of the tribe of Benjamin, was raised up to be the deliverer. Obtaining a secret interview with the king, he stabbed him, then rallied the Israelites in Mount Ephraim, seized the fords of the Jordan and cut the Moabites to pieces. Then Israel had peace for eighty years (iii. 12-30).

(3) *Invasion from the north.* When Israel again did evil in the sight of Jehovah, he raised up against them Jabin, king of Canaan, whose general was Sisera. With nine hundred chariots of iron this king mightily oppressed Israel for twenty years. Then God raised up **Deborah**, the prophetess of Mount Ephraim, who, together with **Barak**, of the tribe of Naphtali, freed the land from this scourge. In a memorable battle in the plain of Esdraelon, Sisera was put to flight by Barak's army and the land was delivered from the Canaanites. Again the land had rest for forty years (iv., v.).

(4) *Invasion from the east.* In their next disobedience Jehovah gave Israel into the hands of the Midianites, a fierce desert tribe, whose raids were so feared that the children of Israel were driven into mountains and caves and strongholds. For seven successive seasons this oppression continued, and their enemies were in possession of the whole land (vi. 4) before the children of Israel were brought to repentance. At last a prophet by the name of **Gideon**, of the tribe of Manasseh, defied the Midianites, and by a very daring stratagem put them to flight. The brilliant exploits of Gideon aroused the jealousy of the strong tribe of Ephraim, but Gideon was so generous in his praise that he was able to keep it down. After his death, Abimelech, his son, by a concubine of Ephraim, stirred up the Shechemites to acknowledge him as king, but his

hands were stained with the blood of his brethren and he came to a miserable end (vi.-viii. 32).

(5) *Invasion from the east.* After nearly a half century of peace another terrible scourge overtook Israel, following one of their worst apostasies. The oppressors this time were the Ammonites. For eighteen years they oppressed the children of Israel east of the Jordan, and then they crossed the Jordan and oppressed Judah, Benjamin and Ephraim. The children of Israel in their distress cried unto Jehovah, but at first He turned a deaf ear to them, bidding them turn to the gods they had chosen. A more genuine repentance brought relief at the hands of **Jephthah**, a Gileadite, who was victorious over the Ammonites in a notable battle near Aroer. He, too, encountered the jealousy of the Ephraimites, against whom he turned his arms and greatly decimated them. Jephthah judged Israel six years (xi.-xii. 7).

(6) *Invasion from the southwest.* The severest afflictions which Israel suffered at the hands of any of their oppressors came from the Philistines, a warlike race of Greek origin, who had settled in the coast plain. Jehovah delivered the children of Israel into their hands for forty years. At last deliverance came by the hand of **Samson**, a hero of the little tribe of Dan, who from his birth was consecrated as a Nazirite unto Jehovah. Samson's exploits form the most romantic pages of the Old Testament. The downfall of Samson forms one of the most striking character-lessons in the Bible (xiii.-xv.).

Besides these, six others are mentioned: Shamgar, who performed a daring feat against the Philistines (iii. 3, 4); Tola, a man of Issachar, who judged Israel twenty-three years (x. 1, 2); Jair, the Gileadite, who judged Israel twenty-two years (x. 3, 4); Ibzan, of Bethlehem, who judged Israel seven years (xii. 8-10); Elon, of Zebulun, who judged Israel ten years (xii. 11, 12); Abdon, of Pirathon, who judged Israel eight years (xii. 13-15).

Eli, Samuel and Abimelech performed the function of judge and are sometimes placed in the list of judges, making a total number of fifteen.

The book closes with two detached incidents, the story of Micah and his image worship, in connection with the settlement of Dan; and the outrage of the Gibeathites and their extermination (xvii. to xxi.).

3. The book of **Ruth** is placed after Judges because it belongs to this time. The Hebrews class it with the third great division of

their Bible, "*the Writings*." The chief purpose of the book seems to be the tracing of the genealogy of David to the Moabite maiden, Ruth. The contents are familiar. A man of Bethlehem, during a famine, goes with his wife and two sons to Moab. They all die but the mother, Naomi, who now determines to return to her native city. Her Moabite daughters-in-law would go with her, and Ruth, a pattern of filial piety, persists. At Bethlehem, Ruth attracts the attention of Boaz, a man of property, a relative of her husband's family, who ultimately makes her his wife, and by this union Ruth becomes the great-grandmother of David.

QUESTIONS

1. What were the Judges?
2. Give the divisions of the book of the Judges.
3. Name the chief Judges and give the occasion of their deliverance.
4. Name the minor Judges.
5. What other names are sometimes included in this list?
6. What is the significance of the book of Ruth? Tell the story of the book.

LESSON XII

THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY

BOOKS: 1 and 2 Samuel)

During the period of the Judges the government of the people was largely that of tribal leaders. Relatively it was like that of Germany before the empire; there was no national unity. It is true that the high priest, Eli, retained his position, and the tabernacle at Shiloh formed a rallying point for the people. But Eli's sons proved unworthy to succeed him, and nothing was to be hoped for from the priesthood in a political emergency. It fell to the lot of Samuel to lead the people in the transition days from the Judges to the monarchy.

1. **The Work of Samuel** occupies chapters i. to xii. of the first book that bears his name. The narrative opens with the beautiful story of Samuel's birth and childhood, his service in the tabernacle at Shiloh, and the divine call that came to him there in the degenerate days of Eli's judgeship (i. to iii.). When he grew up he was recognized at Shiloh as a "prophet of the Lord"; and, when Israel was chastened by the Philistines and the ark taken (iv.), Samuel led the people to repentance, and there was a revival of religion, followed by the successful battle of Ebenezer (v. to vii. 14). From this time forward Samuel's authority as judge was recognized throughout the land. With headquarters at Ramah, he made the circuit to Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpeh, administering the nation's affairs (vii. 15-17). In time, however, the Israelites became tired of the government of Judges; and ostensibly because Samuel's sons were worthless men, but really because they wished to be "like the nations around them," they asked Samuel for a king (viii. 1-5). Though it was in the plan of God that Israel should have a king, Israel's demand from the motive that prompted it, was really a rejection of God's rule (viii. 7). After warning them of the dangers they were inviting, Samuel reluctantly yielded to their importunity and anointed Saul, the son of Kish (ix. to xi.), after which he formally laid down his office (xii.).

2. **The Reign of Saul** occupies the remainder of 1 Samuel, but

throughout the narrative Samuel and David figure as prominently as Saul himself. Saul was a warrior of prowess and figured in seven military campaigns.

(1) *The campaign against the Ammonites at Jabesh-Gilead.* The ancestral foes of Israel on the east were the Ammonites, from whom Jephthah had delivered Israel. Jabesh-Gilead, east of the Jordan, was now besieged by the Ammonites and its inhabitants threatened with the loss of their right eyes. Their appeal for help aroused the spirit of Saul, who up to that time had been a peaceful husbandman. Mustering the people at Bezek, he organized an army and took swift vengeance upon the Ammonites for their cruelty (1 Sam. xi.).

(2) *The campaign against the Philistines.* For probably a half century the Philistines had dominated Palestine. They not only occupied the maritime plain, but they crossed the central ridge and established their garrisons at Beth-Shean in the north, in the pass of Michmash in Benjamin and at Bethlehem in the south. Michmash commanded the approach from the Jordan Valley. Here Jonathan and a single attendant, aided by an earthquake, completely routed the garrison, and the Philistines were smitten from Michmash to Aijalon (1 Sam. xiv.).

(3) Of the *third campaign*, against Moab, Ammon, Edom and the kings of Zobah, no particulars are recorded (1 Sam. xiv. 47).

(4) *The campaign against the Amalekites*, the ancient enemy of Israel from the days of the wandering, followed. Saul pursued them to the border of Egypt, but failed to fulfill the prophetic doom which rested upon them from the days of Moses, and then attempted to deceive Samuel. It was this disobedience which determined Saul's unfitness to be king, and Samuel was directed to anoint David (1 Sam. xv., xvi.).

(5) *The campaign against the Philistines.* It was Saul's policy, when he saw any mighty man or any valiant man, to ally him to himself. In this way David became one of Saul's men of war. All his life Saul had war with the Philistines (1 Sam. xv. 52). Among the warriors who distinguished himself in this fighting was David. Not only did he worst the champion Goliath, but we read that "the princes of the Philistines went forth, and it came to pass as often as they went forth that David behaved himself more wisely than the servants of Saul, so that his name was much set by" (1 Sam. xviii. 30). The king's jealousy was eventually kindled by the successes of David, and the royal enmity at last became so

marked that he was compelled to flee for his life (1 Sam. xxvii.-xix.).

(6) The *campaign against David*. (See the next chapter.)

(7) The *last campaign against the Philistines*. Saul's last encounter with the Philistines took place in the famous battlefield, the plain of Esdraelon. The loss of David had weakened Saul's defence, and the death of Samuel had robbed him of his counsellor. In his terror he sought the witch of Endor, who called up the spirit of Samuel. Samuel could only foretell his coming defeat, which occurred the day following, Saul and his three sons being among the slain (1 Sam. xxxi.).

3. Saul's Character. Saul was a patriot, a faithful defender of the cause he was called from the plow to espouse. He possessed courage and military genius, but he had an evil disposition, which first showed itself against his own son, Jonathan (xiv.), and grew worse as he was reminded by Samuel that he ruled only by the divine sanction. His conduct toward the Amalekites brought upon him a sentence of final rejection (1 Sam. xv. 23, 35). Bereft of Samuel's guidance and harassed by the unrelieved pressure of war, a spirit of strange and fitful melancholy came over him. The divine Spirit departed from him and an evil spirit from Jehovah troubled him. Even his self-respect was lost, for he sought counsel of a witch, whose class he had condemned and sought to exterminate. His end was as pathetic as the beginning of his career was promising. The position of Israel at Saul's death was practically what it had been when he was called to the throne. The dominion of the Philistines was more securely established than ever. Saul had failed in his task because he had not appreciated the spiritual mission of his nation.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the condition of the nation under the Judges?
2. Who was the last Judge?
3. How was Samuel esteemed by the people?
4. What demand did the people finally make?
5. In what respects was Saul great?
6. Describe his military campaigns.
7. In what respect did Saul fail?
8. What was the condition of Israel at Saul's death?

LESSON XIII

THE UNITED MONARCHY

(1 Samuel xvi. to 2 Samuel)

The united monarchy was established by David, whose reign was the brightest era in the history of Israel and one of the epochs in the movement of redemption.

1. David's Family and Early Life. David was of the family of Jesse, of Bethlehem in the tribe of Judah, the tribe of Caleb and Othniel. By divine direction he was anointed by Samuel while still a shepherd boy (1 Sam. xvi. 13), being chosen over seven older brethren. In the discipline of his shepherd's life he acquired the courage which made him fearless before Goliath: "Thy servant was keeping his father's sheep; and when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb of the flock, I went out after him and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth" (1 Sam. xvii. 34, 35).

2. David's Life at the Court of Saul. David was brought to the court of Saul at Gibeah as a minstrel to soothe his troubled spirit, and he became one of his warrior-heroes. Kindling the jealousy of Saul by his prowess, he was compelled to flee for his life and became an outlaw. At least five attempts were made by Saul to kill him. The greatest human solace which David enjoyed in these days was the friendship of Jonathan.

3. David's Outlaw Life. Obligated to leave Gibeah, David fled southward. He sought refuge with the priests of Nob, the religious center of the land after the destruction of Shiloh. Here he was supplied with weapons and was permitted to eat the sacred shewbread for food. Thence he turned to Gath, the Philistine city, where he feigned madness to save his life. The cave of Adullam, in Judah, next furnished him a stronghold within his own tribe. The wilderness of Judah at Keilah furnished him his next resort, and here he defeated the Philistines, but fear of Saul and treachery on the part of the men of Keilah forced him again eastward to Ziph, in the desolate region overlooking the Dead Sea. Driven

from here by the treachery of the Ziphites, he retreated farther to the south into the wilderness of Maon. The stronghold of Engedi, on the shore of the Dead Sea, furnished his next retreat. Here he met Saul, and by sparing Saul's life he secured a promise of fair treatment. We next find David at Carmel, south of Hebron. At Hachilah, in the southern wilderness, David again spared Saul's life. David, however, could not rely on security so long as he remained in Israelite territory. He felt driven to find refuge with the Philistines, among whom he remained a year and four months. Achish, king of Gath, assigned him and his followers a settlement in Ziklag, near Gaza. He was spared the necessity of fighting against Saul in the final invasion of the Philistines because of the suspicion of the Philistine chiefs. The news of Saul's death was brought to David in Ziklag and wrung from him the lament in 2 Sam. i. (chap. xx.-xxxi.).

4. David's Reign at Hebron. The death of Saul opened the way to David's return to his own territory. At the age of thirty David was called to the throne by the men of Judah, the ancient city of Hebron being chosen by divine direction as the seat of his government. He reigned there for seven and a half years (2 Sam. i.-iv.). An effort was made by Abner to make Ishbosheth, the surviving son of Saul, king, and for a time there was war between the two houses. The murder of Abner and Ishbosheth brought the civil war to an end and left David free to direct his energies against the stronghold of the Jebusites, Jerusalem, which he made his capital, and brought thither the ark from Kirjath-jearim. The Philistines resented this move and attacked David, but they were defeated in a notable battle in the vale of Rephaim (2 Sam. v., vi.).

5. David's Reign at Jerusalem. David's first act in his new capital was strongly to fortify the city and build a royal palace. He then realized that it was not fitting that he should dwell in a house of cedar and the ark of Jehovah dwell within curtains. Hence he proposed to build a temple to Jehovah; but David was a man of war, and the prophet Nathan in Jehovah's name declined the proposal. It was David's mission to establish Israel in the borders promised to Abraham (Gen. xv. 18). To this end he thoroughly subdued the Philistines, the Moabites, the Edomites, the Amalekites, and finally the Syrians. The kingdom of David was now secure from the pressure of external enemies, but new dangers threatened it from within, due to David's own sins. The bitterest drop in his cup was the rebellion of his favorite son,

Absalom. David was driven from Jerusalem and was attacked by Absalom's army, but Absalom suffered defeat and lost his life, to David's great grief (xv. 13 to xviii. 33). The remaining years of David were disturbed by another insurrection, that of Sheba—the prelude of the disruption of the united kingdom (xix. 41 to xx. 22).

6. David's Character. David was the greatest of Jewish kings, the standard and model by which all his successors were measured, and his fame and glory remained uneclipsed until the coming of his Greater Son, in whom the unfulfilled spiritual ideals of Israel were realized. He unified the nation and gave it its true position among the nations as the people of Jehovah. Under his reign the borders of Israel were extended to their widest limits.

QUESTIONS

1. By whom was the united monarchy established?
2. What was David's early life?
3. What was his experience at the court of Saul?
4. Give an account of David's outlaw life.
5. What occurred during his years at Hebron?
6. Give an account of his reign at Jerusalem.
7. What was David's mission in Israel?
8. What is his place in Jewish history?

LESSON XIV

SOLOMON AND THE DISRUPTION

(1 Kings i.-xi., 2 Chron. i.-ix.)

David lived to see his son, Solomon, crowned his successor. Solomon was the son of Bathsheba, and he was the choice not only of David, the king, but also of Nathan, the prophet, and of Zadok, the priest, the latter anointing him. He was, therefore, born to the purple and received a kingdom already prepared for him.

1. Solomon's Wisdom. Solomon's first years were full of promise. He began his reign well, "walking in the statutes of David, his father." When God gave him his choice as to the nature of the divine blessing he chose wisdom (1 Kings iii. 5-15). A famous judicial decision pronounced by him at the beginning of his reign convinced his subjects that "the wisdom of God was with him to do judgment" (1 Kings iii. 28). Posterity credited him with an extraordinary knowledge of nature, and regarded him as the originator of proverbial wisdom (1 Kings iv. 30-33). His fame as a sage was spread abroad throughout the East; the Queen of Sheba (or Saba in Arabia) journeyed a thousand miles to "prove him with hard questions" (1 Kings x. 1).

2. Solomon's Wealth. Scarcely second to his wisdom was Solomon's wealth. The immense number of his horses and of the provisions for his table, given as they are in connection with the extent of his dominion, indicate what was contributed and not what was consumed (1 Kings iv. 21 f.). It is a proof of great wealth. The magnificent presents of the Queen of Sheba, the wealth of gold, spices and precious stones which she laid at Solomon's feet, mark a great development of Israel's commerce with surrounding nations and the consequent growth of her luxury. This development of wealth was too rapid to be healthy, and the age of Solomon was a period not only of social advance, but also of religious decay.

3. Solomon's Diplomacy. Solomon inherited a kingdom, whose territory extended from the borders of Egypt to the Euphrates and as far north as the Orontes. Solomon was not a man of war, but

an organizer and a diplomat. He was not slow to recognize the dangers which rendered his widely extended dominion unstable. It is true he built a chain of fortresses (1 Kings ix. 15 f.), and he fortified Jerusalem, increased his army and introduced cavalry; but his chief method of protection was by diplomatic alliance. His motive in making his numerous foreign marriages was the peaceful protection of his crown. His most powerful friends were King Hiram of Tyre and the Pharaoh of Egypt. With the help of the former he built a fleet of ships and controlled the trade to India; with the help of the latter the caravan trade between Egypt and Mesopotamia reached its most profitable development.

4. Solomon's Temple. Neither Solomon's wisdom nor his wealth constituted his chief title to remembrance, but the fact that he was the builder of the temple at Jerusalem, the visible monument of the religious unity of Israel. The temple was the dream of his father, David, who had spent the energies of his peaceful years in preparing for it. It was built on the site now occupied by the Dome of the Rock, the so-called Mosque of Omar, on Mount Moriah. The temple itself was constructed of huge blocks of stone, ready hewn and squared in the quarry. Like the tabernacle, the temple was oblong in shape, consisting of two chambers, the Holy Place (40 by 20 cubits), and the Holy of Holies (which formed a perfect cube of 20 cubits). The Holy of Holies contained the ark and the golden cherubim, and was lighted only by the mysterious light of the divine presence. It was separated from the Holy Place by a rich curtain, which only the high priest might pass. Within, the temple was covered with pure gold. The approach to the Holy Place consisted of a porch, with two bronze pillars at the entrance, Jachin and Boaz. Along the outer walls were chambers rising three stories high. Outside of the temple was the court of the priests, where daily sacrifices were offered, and where the brazen altar, the huge laver and the golden candlestick stood. Beyond this was the court of the Jews, and beyond that again was the court of the Gentiles. The temple was completed in seven years, and its dedication was the most splendid religious feast in Jewish history.

5. The Decline of Solomon's Power. Solomon needed large resources to maintain his institutions and luxury. Like an oriental sultan he maintained a harem of foreign wives. The revenue from his commerce and his tolls was considerable, but he relied chiefly on the taxation of his people. Accordingly Palestine was divided into twelve fiscal districts, each having the supply of the

royal expenses for a month at a time. As the magnificence centered in Jerusalem the northern tribes, under the leadership of Ephraim, rebelled, while foreign enemies—Hadad the Edomite and Rezon of Zobah—harassed Solomon from without. While the kingdom retained its unity in Solomon's lifetime, like all such states whose material prosperity is not counterbalanced by moral character, its doom was written from within.

6. The Character of Solomon.—The character of Solomon is an enigma. In his early years he gave promise of great piety. His early choice of wisdom, his prayers at the dedication of the temple seemed to indicate a singularly humble and devout spirit. But Solomon did not continue as he began. His love of luxury and his licentiousness turned him to idolatry, bringing upon him the divine judgment. Foes without and dissensions within the kingdom harassed his last days, and he died a warning rather than an example to his nation (xi.).

Chronological Note. It is stated in 1 Kings vi. 1 that Solomon, in the fourth year of his reign, began to build the temple 480 years after the exodus. Professor Robertson makes the following approximation of the details:

The Desert period lasted.....	40 years.
Joshua survived Moses.....	25 years.
The Judges from Othniel to Samuel.....	332 years.
Saul reigned (see Acts xiii. 21).....	40 years.
David reigned (see 1 Kings ii. 11).....	40 years.
Solomon began the temple after.....	3 years.
	480 years.

QUESTIONS

1. Who was Solomon?
2. What was his chief personal characteristic?
3. What is said of his wealth?
4. How did Solomon retain his great power?
5. What was his chief work? Give a general description of the temple.
6. What led to Solomon's downfall?
7. What estimate is to be placed on his character?
8. How long was it from the Exodus to the building of Solomon's temple?

LESSON XV

THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

(Books: 1 Kings xii.-xxii., 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles x.-xxxvi.)

The Books of Kings, like the books of Samuel, are a continuous narrative. Originally, and until 1517 A. D., they were one book in the Hebrew Bible. The name explains itself; they are annals of the Hebrew kings from Solomon to the captivity of Judah, a period of four hundred years. That is a long period to be covered in so short a space, especially considering the important events it included. The account is necessarily fragmentary and condensed. Long reigns are sometimes disposed of in a few verses. The explanation is, the whole history is presented from a religious point of view. Whenever the narrative begins to expand it is plain that the matter has religious significance. From chapter xii. of 1 Kings the narrative gives us the salient points in the history of the divided kingdoms. The fortunes of the two kingdoms are narrated contemporaneously in Kings.*

The Divided Kingdom. The division of the kingdom came about as the result of the jealousy of Ephraim and the heedless folly of Rehoboam, who succeeded Solomon. During the later years of Solomon's reign much dissatisfaction arose because of the heavy taxes imposed on the people. When Rehoboam ascended the throne a delegation, headed by Jeroboam, came asking for relief. Rehoboam haughtily refused. The revolt of the ten tribes followed (1 Kings xii. 1 to xiv. 20).

THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

We shall first follow the course of the kingdom of the ten tribes. It lasted upwards of two hundred and fifty years, and at the end of that period it was destroyed by the Assyrians. During that time it had nineteen kings, belonging to nine different families.† There are

* The writer of Chronicles traces the history of the southern kingdom, only incidentally giving the history of the northern kingdom. We take the kingdoms separately for our study.

† See Appendix I. The arrangement is that of Dr. W. G. Blaikie, "Manual of Bible History," used by permission of T. Nelson & Sons.

four clearly defined periods in the history of this kingdom: in the first, the most prominent king was Jeroboam; in the second, Ahab; in the third, Jehu; in the fourth, Pekah. During the first period idolatry took root; during the second, it was dominant; during the third it was somewhat checked through the influence of the prophets; during the fourth it ended in the downfall of the kingdom.

1. Idolatry Taking Root. In order to keep his people away from Jerusalem and the influence of the southern kingdom, **Jeroboam** set up two golden calves, one at Bethel, just north of Judah, and the other at Dan, at the extreme north of the kingdom. "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem," he said; "behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (1 Kings xii. 28). It was a bad beginning and it was solemnly denounced by God through a prophet sent from Judah (xiii.). Jeroboam made priests of the lowest of the people and acquired for himself in history the unenviable reputation, "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin." Jeroboam was succeeded by his son **Nadab** (xv. 25-30); then **Baasha**, the murderer of Nadab, took possession of the kingdom and was followed by his son, **Elah**, who was murdered by his own servant, **Zimri**. The murderer, however, after a week, was succeeded by **Omri**, who founded Samaria as the capital of the northern kingdom and the dynasty which bears his name (xvi.).

2. Idolatry Dominant. Omri was succeeded by his son, **Ahab**, under whom the country received a terrible impulse toward idolatry and consequent ruin. The moving spirit of his iniquity was Jezebel, his wife, daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians, whose name is a synonym of wickedness to this day. She led her husband to establish the worship of Baal and Ashtarte, nature deities, and to persecute the prophets of Jehovah, putting them to the sword. "Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him" (xvi. 33). The result was the appearance of **Elijah** the Tishbite, whose life-long conflict with the king is the most conspicuous feature in his reign. Elijah and his successor, **Elisha**, did their best to stay idolatry, but their efforts were largely in vain. Not till the fiery **Jehu** appeared and ruthlessly exterminated the house of Ahab was idolatry checked and Baal worship stopped (2 Kings ix.).

3. Idolatry Slightly Checked. The reigns of Jehu and those of **Jehoahaz** and **Joash** (Jehoash), his son and grandson, lasted about sixty years, but they are marked by no important event except the

death of Elisha (xiii. 14-21). Under the long and faithful ministry of Elisha idolatry appears to have received a check, so that the destruction of the kingdom was arrested for a time. The chief reign of this period was that of **Jeroboam II.**, which lasted forty-one years, in which Israel enjoyed great outward prosperity, but which was made memorable by the appearance of the prophets, **Jonah**, **Amos** and **Hosea**. The prophetic note now is that of impending doom. That the nation may be made to see how hateful idolatry is to God, Jonah is sent to Nineveh to declare its doom, Amos preaches the day of the divine indignation in merciless rebuke, while Hosea pleads like a wooing lover. But "Ephraim is wedded to his idols." Nothing can save the wayward nation.

4. **Idolatry Ends in Captivity.** The kings who follow Jeroboam II. are murderers and profligates. The common record of them now is, "And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD and followed the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin." **Zachariah**, the son of Jeroboam, was openly murdered after a reign of six months. His murderer, **Shallum**, reigned a month and was in turn murdered by **Menahem**, who reigned ten years. His son, **Pekahiah**, reigned two years, when he was slain by **Pekah**, whose reign continued through twenty years. During his reign Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, invaded the land and carried off many of the inhabitants. Pekah was murdered by **Hoshea** (2 Kings xv. 8-31), in whose reign Samaria was taken by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria. Hoshea and his people were carried captive to Assyria, and the kingdom of the ten tribes came to an end (2 Kings xvi. 9 to xvii. 41). Aliens were now sent by the Assyrians as colonists in their land. In this way the population became much mixed, the Samaritans, of whom we read in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, being descendants of this mongrel race.

POINTS TO BE FIXED

1. The northern kingdom fell in 722 B. C., and was never restored.
2. The chief prophets of the northern kingdom were Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Hosea and Amos.
3. Two foreign foes harassed Israel—the Syrians in the early days and the Assyrians in the later days of the kingdom. Of the former, Hazael and Ben-hadad are the kings mentioned. Naaman, Ben-hadad's general in the days of Ahab, was cured by Elisha. The contest with Syria lasted a hundred years and was ended by the interference of the Assyrians, who crushed both. There were at least

three invasions of Israel by the Assyrians: (1) by Shalmaneser II., to whom Jehu paid tribute (mentioned only on the monuments); (2) by Pul, a military adventurer, in the reign of Menahem (2 Kings xv. 19), who, as Tiglath-Pileser II., returned in the reign of Pekah (2 Kings xv. 29); (3) by Shalmaneser IV., who took the tribes into captivity.

QUESTIONS

1. What period of time is covered by the books of Kings?
2. What led to the division of the kingdom?
3. How long did the northern kingdom continue?
4. Into what periods does its history divide itself?
5. Name the principal king in each.
6. What great prophets appeared in Israel?
7. When was Israel taken captive, and by whom?

LESSON XVI

THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH

(BOOKS: 1 and 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles x.-xxxvi., Isaiah, Jeremiah)

The kingdom of Judah lasted one hundred and thirty-four years after the fall of the kingdom of Israel, or about four hundred years after the revolt of the ten tribes. During that period nineteen kings sat on the throne, all of the same dynasty, lineal descendants of David.* Four distinct periods are marked by the religious moods of the nation—four distinct declines, from all of which there was reformation except the last.

1. First Decline and First Revival. The people of Judah began to do "evil in the sight of the LORD" in the days of **Rehoboam**. They were chastened by an invasion of Shishak, king of Egypt (1 Kings xiv. 25, 26). Rehoboam was succeeded by **Abijam**, "who walked in all the sins of his father and whose heart was not perfect with the LORD his God." After Abijam came **Asa**, who in his long reign of forty-one years showed reforming zeal and was successful in his conflict with Israel (1 Kings xv. 9-24). Under **Jehoshaphat** (2 Chron. xvii. to xx.), whose reign lasted twenty-five years, Judah's power reached high-water mark. Jehoshaphat "did what was right in the sight of the LORD" (1 Kings xxii. 43). He not only strengthened and fortified his cities, but he gave his personal attention to the religious needs of his people, in which the princes took part with the Levites in teaching the people. Jehoshaphat felt the mistake of the separation of the kingdoms, and while he could not undo it, through his amiability he was induced to form an alliance with Ahab, king of Israel, which proved hurtful to his kingdom. The alliance continued in the time of Ahab's sons and successors (1 Kings xxii. 41 to 2 Kings iii.) and was cemented by the marriage of Jehoshaphat's son, Jehoram, to Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (2 Kings viii. 16-18).

2. Second Decline and Second Revival. **Jehoram** succeeded

* See Appendix II. The arrangement is that of Dr. W. G. Blaikie, "Manual of Bible History," used by permission of T. Nelson & Sons.

his father, Jehoshaphat, and reigned eight years. The pernicious influence of his wife at once began to be felt. "He walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab," is Jehoram's brief but significant biography (2 Kings viii. 18). **Ahaziah**, his son and successor, fell under the vengeance of Jehu (ix. 27). **Athaliah**, the murderess, assumed the throne, and for six years the land groaned under her tyranny (xi. 1-3). **Joash**, the infant son of Ahaziah, who was saved by Jehoida the high priest, for forty years vacillated between good and evil, and was finally slain by his own servants (xii. 20). During his reign Hazael, king of Syria, advanced against Gath, and would have besieged Jerusalem had he not been bought off by a bribe of the sacred treasures of the temple (xii. 17-21). The reign of **Amaziah**, his son, was signalized by a war with Edom, in which he triumphed, and by a war with Israel, in which he was defeated (xiv.). The reign of his successor, **Uzziah** (Azariah), was the longest in the history of Judah, up to this point, fifty-two years. He began well, but prosperity spoiled him, and he was smitten with leprosy for his sacrilege (xv.). Isaiah, the great prophet, comes upon the stage of Judah's history in his reign. **Jotham**, his successor, had to face a conspiracy of Pekah, of Israel, and Rezin, of Damascus (xv. 32-38); and the danger became so great in the reign of his successor, **Ahaz**, that the latter sent offers of submission to Assyria as the price of assistance (xvi. 1-8), against the remonstrances of Isaiah. Better days for Judah came with **Hezekiah**, "the good king," who brought about a revival of religion throughout the land. The inspiring genius of Hezekiah's reign was Isaiah, who saw the character of succeeding kings and foretold the approaching captivity. The chief external event in Hezekiah's reign was the siege of Sennacherib, the great Assyrian being turned back by "a blast from the LORD" (xix. 7). The prophets Micah and Nahum appear at this point.

3. **Third Decline and Third Revival.** The destruction of Judah was accelerated by the next two kings, **Manasseh** and **Amon** (2 Kings xxi.). Manasseh reigned fifty-five years. He was carried a vassal to Babylon by Esar-haddon, but was restored (2 Chron. xxxiii. 10-13). **Josiah**, encouraged by the prophets Zephaniah and Jeremiah, began a reforming crusade, but the promise of better things raised by his zeal was quenched by his early death while fighting against Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt, at Megiddo (2 Kings xxii., xxiii.).

4. **Final Decline.** From this point the history of Judah hastens

to its close. After setting aside **Jehoahaz**, a son of Josiah, Pharaoh makes his brother **Jehoiakim** king; but he is hard pressed by the Babylonians, and the next king, **Jehoiachin**, is a mere puppet in Nebuchadnezzar's hands. National independence is no more. Jehoiachin, with ten thousand of his people, Daniel among the number, is taken to Babylon. **Zedekiah** is the next king, and throughout his eleven years he is constantly plied by Jeremiah's prophecies. Zedekiah angered the Babylonian king by a revolt, and Nebuchadnezzar marched against Jerusalem, and after a siege of three years destroyed it, carrying Judah into captivity (2 Kings xxv.).

POINTS TO BE FIXED

1. The kingdom of Judah fell in 586 B. C., and the people went into captivity for seventy years.
2. The chief prophets of the southern kingdom were Joel, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Jeremiah, Habakkuk and Obadiah.
3. Three foreign foes harassed Judah—the Assyrians under Sennacherib and Esar-haddon, the Egyptians under Pharaoh-necho, and the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar, under whom Judah went into captivity.

QUESTIONS

1. How long did the southern kingdom continue?
2. Into what periods does its history divide itself?
3. Name the principal king in each.
4. What great prophets appeared in Judah?
5. When was Judah taken captive, and by whom?

LESSON XVII

THE CAPTIVITY AND THE RESTORATION

(Books: Isaiah, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Malachi.)

Places: Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Palestine.

1. The Captivity of Israel. The children of Jacob are now scattered in four or five different countries. Assyria, Media, Babylonia, Egypt and Palestine contained each a part of them. The successive invasions of the northern kingdom by the kings of Assyria, with the results of each, are seen at a glance in the following table: *

Year B. C.	Assyrian Kings.	Kings of Israel.	People Carried Off.	Kings of Judah.	Year Before Destruction of Jerusalem.
771	Pul.	Menahem.	Reuben, Gad, etc.	Uzziah.	183
740	Tiglath-Pileser.	Pekah.	Gilead, Galilee, etc.	Ahaz.	152
721	Shalmaneser.	Hoshea.	All Israel.	Hezekiah.	133

Assyria was a cruel nation, and the Israelites suffered many hardships at their hands. The greater part of the captives were placed in the province of Media. That land became an independent kingdom under Deioces (Arphaxad), who made Ecbatana his capital. The social condition of Israel in Media was much better than in Assyria, but their religious condition did not improve. What ultimately became of the Ten Tribes is one of the unsolved problems of history.

2. The Captivity of Judah. In the kingdom of Judah, as in that of the Ten Tribes, the captives were carried off in three detachments, as is shown by the following table:†

* The arrangement is that of Dr. W. G. Blaikie, "Manual of Bible History," used by permission of T. Nelson & Sons.

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Year B. C.	Kings of Judah.	The Conqueror.	People Carried Off.
607	Jehoiakim.	Nebuchadnezzar acting for his father.	Daniel and Other Princes.
599 588	Jehoiachin. Zedekiah.	Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar.	10,000 chief people. Nearly all the people.

A remnant remained in the Holy Land, and a larger remnant found its way to Egypt.

The dominant power in the East now was Babylon, which, under **Nebuchadnezzar**, rose to great proportions. Nebuchadnezzar was one of the most powerful monarchs who ever reigned in the East. He brought into one empire Chaldea, Assyria, Arabia, Palestine, Egypt, and other countries. It was in his reign that the events recorded in the early chapters of Daniel occurred. Babylonia was overthrown by **Cyrus**, the Persian, who had been designated by Isaiah as the deliverer of the Jews, though the city of Babylon, surrounded by walls of enormous height and strength, and having provisions for twenty years, long remained free. How Cyrus took Babylon is told in Daniel v. Though Babylon was taken by Cyrus, its nominal master, Gobryus, the Persian general and satrap of Assyria, conducted the military campaign. He is called in Scripture **Darius** the Mede. He and Cyrus divided their vast empire into one hundred and twenty provinces, over which they placed three presidents, of whom **Daniel** was the first, when Cyrus was absent on a military expedition. Daniel's enemies accused him to Darius, who cast him into a den of lions. Daniel's miraculous escape raised him to still higher honors (Daniel vi.).

3. **Foregleams of Restoration.** Darius soon died, and Cyrus succeeded to the magnificent Medo-Persian empire. It is not difficult to imagine the status of Daniel before this monarch and to believe that the venerable prophet would call the king's attention to Isaiah's prophecy concerning him (Isa. xlv.). Yielding to the impression of such truths as these prophecies contain, Cyrus, among his first acts, issued a decree permitting the Jews to return and build their temple at Jerusalem. While many of the Jews, having prospered in Babylon, did not now care to return, yet, as a state of compulsory bondage, the Babylonian captivity was at an end.

4. **The Several Expeditions to Jerusalem.** There were three expeditions to Jerusalem.

(1) The first Jewish leader was **Zerubbabel**, who left Babylon

when Cyrus came to the throne, 535 B. C. After an interval of about twenty years, he was enabled to complete the rebuilding of the temple, in the reign of Darius Hystaspes, the ablest prince who ever sat upon the throne of Persia.

(2) The second Jewish leader was **Ezra**, who went from Babylon about eighty years after Zerubbabel, 458 B. C., in the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus. His work was to restore the institutions of Moses in the worship of Jehovah.

(3) The third Jewish leader was **Nehemiah**, who went up from Susa (Shushan) later in the reign of the same Artaxerxes, 445 B. C. He rebuilt the wall and set up the gates of Jerusalem, and instituted many reforms.

5. The Interval Between the Old Testament and the New.

There is a great historical chasm of four hundred years in length stretching between the Old Testament and the New. During that time there was neither prophet nor inspired writer among the Jews. Our knowledge of the history of this time is derived chiefly from Josephus, a distinguished Jew of Jerusalem, born 37 A. D. The land of Palestine during this period was under the dominion of the following:

(1) It was under the rule of the **Persians** to the year 333 B. C.

(2) It was under the rule of **Alexander the Great** for the next ten years.

(3) On his death (323 B. C.) it fell, after a long contest, under the **Ptolemys** of Egypt, and so remained until 204 B. C.

(4) It then came under the rule of **Syria**, till it was set free by the **Maccabees**, 163 B. C.

(5) It was ruled by the **Maccabees** for a hundred years.

(6) It was taken by the **Romans** under Pompey (63 B. C.) and made tributary to the great mistress of the world.

QUESTIONS

1. Under what powers was the northern kingdom captive?
2. What became of the Ten Tribes?
3. Under what powers was the southern kingdom captive?
4. Who was the most powerful of all the oriental monarchs?
5. Who succeeded the Babylonians as a world-power?
6. Who did Isaiah say would be the deliverer of the Jews?

7. What expeditions returned to Palestine?
8. How long an interval elapsed before the coming of Jesus Christ?
9. Under what rulers was Palestine during these four hundred years?

LESSON XVIII

THE PROPHETS

1. Definition. The prophets were a series of men appearing at different times in the history of Israel, claiming to be, and acknowledged to be, in a special sense, the spokesmen of God. By the derivation of the word they were "announcers" or "heralds" of the divine will. There are a number of other terms used in the Old Testament to designate a prophet. He is called a "man of God" (1 Sam. ix. 6; 1 Kings xvii. 18), a "servant" (1 Kings xviii. 36; Isa. xx. 3), a "messenger" (Isa. xliii. 27), a "seer" (1 Sam. ix. 9), and a "watchman" (Ezek. iii. 17). All these terms express a close relation between the prophet and God. The prophet was "a mediator by speech between God and man." Prediction was only a part, and the less important part, of his function.

2. The Earlier, or Pre-Writing Prophets. The founder of Hebrew prophecy was Moses (Jer. vii. 25), though Abraham is also called a prophet (Gen. xx. 7) and the patriarchs are so described (Ps. cv. 5). The prophets came into special prominence at two important crises in Israel's history: the invasions of the Philistines in the eleventh, and the Syrian war of the ninth century, B. C. Groups or bands of prophets first appeared in the time of Samuel and continued for several centuries. Prior to the writing prophets the two names of greatest importance are Samuel and Elijah. Samuel in his own day was called a "seer," and was consulted as an oracle. To him more than to anyone else the national enthusiasm in the Philistine wars was due. He was the popular religious leader of his day. A still more picturesque champion of Jehovah was Elijah. In his conflict with Jezebel and the prophets of Baal (1 Kings xviii.), and his announcement of the doom of the royal house (1 Kings xxi.), he was a militant prophet, a popular champion of monotheism. Elijah's contest on Mount Carmel is one of the grandest scenes in history. Though not less influential, Elisha was a less heroic character than his master, Elijah. He was a pastor rather than a preacher, the "father of his people," whose miracles were wrought usually for the relief of distress.

3. **The Later, or Writing Prophets.** After Elijah and Elisha the prophets withdrew from external national conflicts. They no longer headed revolutions, but they continued to be statesmen. They continued to have as their dominating mission the salvation of the nation from harmful foreign alliances, with their consequent religious synergism; but the only weapon which they used was the word of God, which came to them by special revelation. Instead of dealing with individual kings and dynasties, they now dealt with the people as a nation. It was not enough to exterminate Baal worship. Jehovah was a God of righteousness and required righteousness in the lives of those who professed His name. It is morality for its own sake that Jehovah honors and immorality that He punishes (Amos iv. 12, Micah vi. 8). As the keynote of prophecy became less national and more ethical that class of prophets known as the "false" prophets arose. This name does not mean that they were intentional deceivers. They were rather self-deceived. They lived in the confidence that Jehovah would not allow the nation to be overthrown and that in a crisis He would always come to the help of Israel. Naturally they were more popular than the true prophets. It may have been their unpopularity, because of the more gloomy message, that drove the true prophets to the pen. However that may be, we are now concerned with the writing prophets. At first they did not seem to take pains to preserve their message in writing, though a number of them have left written compositions, embodying their teachings, which bear their names. We have learned that they are commonly divided into the **Major Prophets** (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel) and the **Minor Prophets** (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi). This division does not indicate either the importance or the date of the prophecies, but it is due to the relative length of the books. The writing prophets have been classified in the following groups:

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| (1) Those who appeared shortly before the fall
of Samaria, 721 B. C..... | { | Amos
Hosea
Isaiah
Micah |
|---|---|----------------------------------|

Of these the first three are among the greatest of the prophets, while in Micah we have one of the greatest sayings in the Old Testament (vi. 8).

- (2) Those who appeared shortly before the fall of Jerusalem, 586 B. C. { Jeremiah
Ezekiel
Zephaniah
Nahum
Habakkuk

These men stood on the brink of the destruction of their nation, and the two greatest of them, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, lay stress on those aspects of religion which would persist after the nation was extinct, namely, personal piety and individual responsibility.

- (3) The prophets of the restoration and of the post-exilic period { Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi
Obadiah

Isaiah xl.-lxvi., called Second Isaiah, is by many included in this division, as are Joel, Jonah and Daniel. The exact date of these prophecies is not important, and it is impossible with our present knowledge to give an exact date. Daniel seems to date itself; and of the others the message is far more important than the time and place of writing.

A very good classification according to their mission has been made as follows:

Jonah }
Amos } tried to save Israel from the Assyrians. They failed.
Hosea }
Micah }

Joel }
Nahum } tried to save Judah from the Assyrians. They succeeded.
Isaiah }

Jeremiah }
Zephaniah } tried to save Judah from the Babylonians. They failed.
Habakkuk }

Daniel }
Ezekiel } preached reform during the Babylonian captivity.
Obadiah }

Haggai
Zechariah } after the return tried to rebuild the kingdom and
Malachi } preached the coming of the Messiah.

QUESTIONS

1. Who were the prophets?
2. Who was the founder of Hebrew prophecy?
3. What two crises in Israel's history brought the prophets into prominence?
4. Who were the most important pre-writing prophets?
5. What difference marked the "writing" prophets?
6. What were "false" prophets?
7. How are the prophets commonly classified?
8. How are they sometimes classified according to their date?
9. How are they classified according to their mission and success?

LESSON XIX

AMOS, THE PROPHET OF THE MORAL LAW

While it will not be possible for us to study all the prophets in detail, an acquaintance with the messages of the chief prophets is necessary to an understanding of the Old Testament. It is best and most natural to take the prophets as nearly as possible in their chronological order. The order of the prophets in our English Bible is determined rather by the length of the books than by the relative dates. The first of the writing prophets of prominence is Amos.

1. **The Man.** Of Amos we know only what his book itself tells us, viz., that he was a shepherd and a dresser of sycamore trees in Tekoa, six miles south of Bethlehem, a barren and desolate region, and that the word of Jehovah came to him in the reign of Jeroboam II. (781-740 B. C.). Amos disclaims being a prophet or the son of a prophet (vii. 14). By this he means that he did not belong to the prophetic order, and hence had not the training of a professional prophet. He was a plain man—as we judge from the fact that his father's name is not given—whose solitude had given him a clear vision of reality and whose isolation had made the companionship of God more welcome.

2. **The Age.** The period in which Amos was called to his prophetic work was one of singular external advantage. A great change had come over Israel and Judah with the advent of the eighth century B. C. Israel had recovered her possessions east of the Jordan and was enjoying the peaceful reign of Jeroboam II. Judah was established in all her borders under the strong hand of Uzziah. It was an era of peace and prosperity. Commerce flourished and wealth abounded. City life was developed, with its luxury and ease. There was feasting and drinking in excess. Not only the king, but many rich men also had their palaces and summer houses. The distinction between the rich and the poor widened. Religion became mere ceremonialism. The sacred feasts were thronged by devotees, who rivaled one another in their tithes and offerings. But these sacred festivals were looked upon as

times for revelry. The Mosaic conception of God as a God of righteousness had been forgotten. The claims of morality and justice were ignored.

3. The Message. Amos appeared at Bethel, the royal sanctuary of the northern kingdom and the most popular of the religious shrines of his day, at the autumn feast, when the élite of the nation were assembled for worship. It was in the year 760 B. C., when revelry was the order of the day, when the rich were to be found reclining on their couches of ivory, anointed with precious oils, drinking choice wines from costly bowls and multiplying instruments of music, that this plain, austere man came on the scene like an apparition and under the shadow of the royal palace began to chant his prophetic dirge:

"Fallen, to rise no more,
Is the virgin of Israel;
Prostrate she lies on her soil,
There is none to upraise her." (V. 2.)

Amos saw the real significance of that steady westward movement of Assyria which has been described as "by far the greatest event in the eighth century B. C.," the scourge which Providence was preparing for the overthrow of Israel. How much of the book as we now have it was orally delivered we do not know. As his oracles have been collected they may be thus grouped:

(1) The Approaching Judgment of the Nations (i. 2 to ii. 16).

(2) The Case of Israel (ii.-vi.).

The Indictment (iii. 1, 2).

The Prophet's Credentials (iii. 3-8).

The Approval of the Heathen (iii. 8-15).

The Depth of Israel's Guilt (iv.).

The Unwilling Severity of Jehovah (v. vi.).

(3) Visions of Israel's Fate (vii.-ix. 8).

(4) A Penitent Remnant (ix. 8-15).

Amos has been called "the Doomsman of Israel." The theme of his book is judgment. It was aimed to shatter the popular confidence that Israel was the chosen people of Jehovah, and, therefore, immune from destruction. "You only," says Jehovah, "have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore"—not "will I pass over," but—"will I visit upon you all your iniquities" (iii. 2).

Amos's prophecy is one of severe denunciation, except the last.

eight verses. So relentless is his denunciation that some critics have doubted that these verses came from his pen. But destruction was never the last word of any prophet. The prophets were preachers of repentance, but the inspiration of repentance is hope. Israel's judgment was in order to her salvation.

QUESTIONS

1. What do we know of the personal life of Amos?
2. What was the condition of Israel in the eighth century B. C.?
3. What message did Amos bring to Israel?
4. Was "doom" the last word of Amos for Israel?

LESSON XX

HOSEA, THE PROPHET OF LOVE

Amos was the first of the great writing prophets; **Hosea** was the second. As Amos interpreted religion in terms of law, Hosea interpreted it in terms of love. "He is the first prophet of grace, Israel's first evangelist."

1. **The Man.** Amos was a plain, untutored countryman from the uplands of Judea; Hosea was a city man of rank and culture. His father's name, which Jewish tradition identifies with a Reubenite prince, who was carried into captivity (1 Ch. v. 6) is given. Like Amos, Hosea abounds in figures taken from country life; so that, while he lived in Samaria he was probably not a native of the city. He was the only resident writing prophet that the northern kingdom produced.

2. **The Age.** Hosea says that he received his visions in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and of Jeroboam, king of Israel. Chapters i.-iii. undoubtedly refer to events of the time of Jeroboam II., while chapters iv.-xiv. seem to reflect the troubled period subsequent to that time. For these reasons Hosea's date has been fixed at 750-735 B. C. Since Amos's day Israel had been drifting rapidly to its doom. Jeroboam did not long survive the advent of Hosea. His son and successor, Zachariah, was slain after six months. Then followed a period of anarchy. From 760 to 732 B. C. there were no less than seven different kings of Israel, and of these four were assassinated by their successors. Meanwhile the people reflected the instability of their government by the instability of their religion. They had taken over the high places of the Canaanites, and from the beginning of their life in Canaan they had been a prey to the temptation to religious syncretism—the mixing of the worship of Jehovah with the worship of the local Baal. The shrines on many a hilltop had become places of public prostitution (iv. 13), and they had grown steadily more popular. And now the worship of Jehovah itself had become so infected that Hosea declared that it was nothing short of the worship of Baal. He charges that they no longer knew

Jehovah (v. 4). Their feasts were but a whoring after other gods. Worship, which centered in calflike figures and "mazzeboth," was not likely to have a high ethical bearing on life. In consequence, also, injustice and fraud were rife in the very precincts of the sanctuary. The prophet denounces those that "removed the landmark" (v. 10), and those also who oppress by means of "balances of deceit" (xii. 7).

3. Hosea's Preparation for His Task. Such was the situation when Hosea was called to his mission. Amos had been a voice of judgment. A prophet was needed with as keen a conscience as Amos's, but with a more tender heart—a prophet of grace. To prepare him for this office Hosea was permitted to marry Gomer, who became the mother of his children and then became unfaithful and left his house. Then to Hosea in his sorrow Jehovah revealed that Israel had been as unfaithful to Him as Gomer had been to Hosea, that the sin of the nation against its God had been "whoredom," but that He had not for that reason given His people up. By the divine example Hosea is led to buy back from her slavery his unfaithful wife and restore her to her home.

4. Hosea's Message. The spiritual idea of the relation between Jehovah and Israel had been lost. Having come to look upon Deity, under the influence of Baal worship, as a mere fertilizer of field and flock, he saw that Israel was playing the harlot. The new generation of Israel were not Jehovah's spiritual children. Logically the next step would have been for Jehovah to divorce his unfaithful spouse, but He is God and not man. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I surrender thee, Israel? My heart is turned within me. My compassions are kindled together" (xi. 8, 9). This is Hosea's message. The nation must first be brought to repentance (ii. 6-13). Hope must be held out (ii. 16-23). God will yet heal His people and love them freely (xiv. 4).

5. The Second Book of Hosea, as ch. iv.-xiv. are sometimes called, contains the substance of the prophet's discourses during the years subsequent to Jeroboam II. It is difficult to trace a definite plan of arrangement. The prophet exhorts, laments, warns, pleads, denounces, promises—in short, uses every possible means of persuasion—to win back the people to Jehovah. Various arrangements of the material have been made. The following (after George Adam Smith) may be helpful:

A PEOPLE IN DECAY

- I. Morally (iv.-vii. 7).
 - iv. God's charge against the people.
 - v. Judgment of (a) Priests, (b) People, (c) Princes.
 - vi. Israel's insincere repentance rebuked.
 - vii. 1-7. Moral degradation and anarchy.
- II. Politically (vii. 7 to x.).
 - vii. 8 to viii. 3. Confusion of the nation.
 - viii. 4-13. Artificial kings and artificial gods.
 - viii. 14 to ix. Exile the punishment of apostasy.
 - x. Such punishment immanent.
 - xi. The fatherhood and humanity of God.
 - xii., xiii. A final argument.
 - xiv. The blessed prospect.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the place of Hosea among the prophets?
2. Who was Hosea, and to whom did he prophesy?
3. What was the national situation in Hosea's day?
4. What was Hosea's preparation for his work?
5. What was Hosea's message?
6. Why is Hosea called the evangelical prophet?
7. How may we classify the material in ch. iv.-xiv.?

LESSON XXI

ISAIAH, THE PROPHET OF FAITH

(Isaiah i.-xxxix.)

The prophecy of **Isaiah** is one of the longest books in the Bible. It covers so wide a scope that it will be best for our purpose to divide it. We consider in this lesson chapters i.-xxxix.

1. **The Man.** All that is really known of Isaiah is stated in the book which bears his name. He was the son of Amoz. Neither the year of his birth nor the year of his death is recorded. The superscription of the book locates his prophetic career in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, or from 740 B. C. until early in the seventh century. He was thus one of the earliest of the writing prophets, contemporary with Amos, Hosea and Micah. He was married and had two children, whom he gave the symbolic names, "A-remnant-shall-remain" and "Swift-booty-speedy-prey." There is a tradition that he was a first cousin of King Uzziah. There is another tradition that his daughter married King Manasseh, and that in the reign of that king Isaiah suffered martyrdom. These traditions probably indicate Isaiah's relation with the royal house.

2. **Isaiah's Times.** Isaiah lived in the most critical period of Judah's history. Beginning life in the midst of the comparative wealth and luxury of the days of Uzziah, he witnessed four great crises in his nation's history:

- (1) The Syro-Ephraimitic invasion, 734-2 B. C.
- (2) The capture and downfall of the northern kingdom, 722-1 B. C.
- (3) The siege of Ashdod, 711 B. C.
- (4) The siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib, 701 B. C.

About these four crises most of Isaiah's prophecies can be assembled. Four different kings reigned in Assyria contemporary with Isaiah: Tiglath-Pileser III. (745-27), Shalmaneser V. (727-22), Sargon II. (722-05), Sennacherib (705-681), all monarchs of great

ability, who carried victorious campaigns along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean.

3. Isaiah's Call. Isaiah's description of his call in chapter vi. is one of the most impressive passages in the Old Testament. The prophet, apparently while worshiping in the temple, saw Jehovah in His heavenly sanctuary "sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." He appeared in the form of a great oriental potentate. It was the year in which King Uzziah died. Uzziah had been the beauideal of the youthful Isaiah. But Uzziah had gone into the temple and attempted with his own hands to burn incense. In consequence he had been stricken with leprosy and had died. Going into the temple in his sorrow Isaiah beheld the sweeping robes of a great potentate, and behold! it was Jehovah on His throne, surrounded by His angelic courtiers. The majesty and holiness of Jehovah overawed him and caused him to cry out with a confession of his sinfulness. He received the assurance of the divine forgiveness, and then, as he heard the voice of Jehovah saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" he promptly replied, "Here am I; send me." Notice that we have in this chapter: (a) A vision of God (1-4); (b) a vision of sin (5); (c) a vision of grace (6, 7); (d) a commission (8-13).

4. Isaiah's Prophecies. Isaiah is the most literary of the prophets, strength and beauty of imagery marking his style. The prophecies of i.-xxxix. naturally divide themselves into the following classes:

(1) i.-xii. (except vi.). A group of oracles addressed to Judah and Jerusalem in the reign of Jotham and Ahaz, reflecting a state of affairs in the southern kingdom similar to that in Israel reflected by Amos and Hosea.

(2) xiii.-xxii. Prophecies addressed mainly against heathen nations.

(3) xxiv.-xxvii. Pictures of the world-judgment and the final Messianic salvation.

(4) xxviii.-xxxv. Later prophecies, mainly in the reign of Hezekiah.

In this material four great prophetic doctrines are found:

(1) *The Message of Doom, or the Day of Jehovah.* This is not unlike the Christian doctrine of the Last Judgment. The Day of Jehovah is primarily a day of wrath (ii.). The present order of the world is to be changed. This will be marked by a miraculous change in nature and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (xi., xxxii.).

The mountain of Jehovah's house is to be established on the top of the mountains and all nations shall flow unto it.

(2) *The Stability of Zion* (xxviii. 16 f.; xxxiii. 20 f.; xxxiv. 8 f.).

(3) *The Doctrine of the Remnant*. Judah shall be visited with judgment, but a remnant shall be saved (i. 9; vi. 13; xvi. 4). This remnant is to be the basis of the ideal kingdom of the future.

(4) *Messianic Prophecies*. The chief of these are:

(a) ii. 2-4. A picture of redemption.

(b) iv. 2-6. The branch of Jehovah.

(c) vii. 14 f. An address in which Isaiah tries to put courage into the heart of Ahaz as he trembles at the coming of Pekah and Rezin, in the course of which he gives the king the memorable sign of the virgin who shall bear a Son and shall call His name Immanuel.

(d) ix. 1-7. The announcement of the purpose of Jehovah to establish His kingdom of peace by means of a scion of the house of David who shall bear the fourfold name, Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

(e) xi. 1 f. The peaceful reign of this scion of the house of David.

5. Isaiah's Dominating Principle. As the dominating principle of Amos had been righteousness, and of Hosea fidelity, so the keynote of Isaiah's prophecies is faith. In the various political crises in which he figured, his appeal to the people of Judah was to trust in Jehovah and not in Assyria or Egypt. What he said to King Ahaz, trembling before the kings of Israel and Syria, may be taken as his general message to the nation: "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established" (vii. 9, cf. xxviii. 16, xxx. 15). He believed that the one controlling force in the world was spiritual, and against this background his prophecies of Doom, of Zion, of the Remnant, and of the Messiah stood forth.

QUESTIONS

1. Who was Isaiah?
2. What was the scene of his public ministry?
3. At what period did he prophesy?
4. Give a description of Isaiah's call?

5. What is Isaiah's place among the writing prophets?
6. How are his prophecies (i.-xxxix.) divided?
7. What four great prophetic doctrines are here given?
8. What is the dominating principle of Isaiah's prophecies?

LESSON XXII

ISAIAH, THE PROPHET OF CONSOLATION

(Isaiah xl.-lxvi.)

1. The Situation. The scene of Isaiah xl.-lxvi. is different from that of i.-xxxix. The people of Israel are no longer in their own land; Jehovah's wife is divorced from him and her children are sold into slavery (xliii. 5, 6). Jerusalem is destroyed and the cities of Judah laid waste (xliv. 26). The dominant world-power is not Assyria, but Babylon. And Babylon is doomed (xlvi. 1, 2; xlvii). The proud oppressor is about to be humbled. A new world-conqueror has appeared on the scene: "Thus saith Jehovah to his anointed, to Cyrus" (xlv. 1). He has already subdued many nations and is about to perform his pleasure upon Babylon herself (xlviii. 14). The Jewish exiles are about to go free. They will be sent back to rebuild Jerusalem and restore the temple. Jehovah is about to manifest Himself as Redeemer.

2. The Author. These circumstances have led modern critical students of the Old Testament to hold that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, was not the author of this section of the prophecy bearing the name of Isaiah. If he were, they say, the whole historical situation pictured is proleptical and not real. The oracles themselves have no title attributing them to Isaiah. If an Isaiah wrote them, it must have been a Second or Deutero-Isaiah who lived in the time of the captivity. This is plausible, but it is singular that Jewish and Christian tradition could be so mistaken as to assign them to the great prophet of Jerusalem. On the other hand, the exile was so real to Isaiah, the son of Amoz, that he seemed to live in it (cf. v. 5, 6; x. 21; xxxii. 13 ff.). The mention of Cyrus by name 150 years before his time is not more remarkable than the prediction of the captivity and its exact duration (Jer. xxv. 11, 12) or the birth-place of the Messiah 700 years before the event (Micah v. 2). The two parts of the book have much in common in spirit and style. The same designation of Jehovah, "the Holy One of Israel," predominates. The vocabulary of both is Palestinian. While some

passages seem to indicate that the author was in Babylon, as many others would indicate the opposite (cf. li. 5 and lii. 11). The message of both parts is redemption.

3. **The Message.** Whether there be one or two Isaiahs, makes no difference in interpretation. We have a series of prophecies addressed to the exiles in Babylon. This half of the prophecy is sometimes called the Book of Consolations. The following classification of the material will be found helpful in the study of these chapters:

I. JEHOVAH'S DELIVERANCE

(1) Four herald voices bringing out the contrast between God and man, and between God and idols (xl.).

(2) Jehovah's assurance of help, and a psalm of praise (xli., xlii., 10 ff.).

(3) Jehovah the only Saviour (xliii.-xlvi):

a. His omnipotence and urgency (xliii.).

b. His superiority to idols (xliv.).

c. His uncompromising righteousness, manifesting itself in every chapter.

d. His appeal to history—Cyrus, Babylon (xlv.-xlvi.).

II. JEHOVAH'S DELIVERER

(1) One God, one people (xli. 8-20; xlii.-xlvii.).

(2) The servant of Jehovah (xli. 8-20; xlii. 1-7, 18 ff.; xliii. 5-10; xlix. 1-9; l. 4-11; lii. 13 to liii.).

(3) The service of God and man (xlii. 1-7).

(4) Prophet and martyr (xlix. 1-9; l. 4-11).

(5) The suffering servant (lii. 13 to liii.).

Nowhere else in the Old Testament have we such an exalted religious ideal as in the Suffering Servant; it is the high-water mark of prophecy. These oracles, spoken first of the entire nation, then of an individual, then of one who is repulsive for his sufferings for others, form the grandest prophetic conception in the Scriptures. First comes the personification of the nation as a servant; then, as the prophet sees that the nation will fail as the servant of Jehovah, the personal servant, who must give his back to the smiters, looms up; then the disclosure that the servant's sufferings were not for himself, but that "he bore the sins of many," dawns upon the prophet; and finally, the exalted servant (lv. 5)—constituting the largest Messianic picture in the Old Testament.

III. THE RESTORATION

- (1) On the threshold (liv.-lvi. 8).
- (2) The rebirth of a nation (lvi. 9 to lix.).
- (3) Salvation in sight (lx.-lxiii. 7).
- (4) A last intercession (lxiii. 8 to lxvi.).

As the keynote of the first part of Isaiah is faith, that of the second part is hope. The first words are, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people" (xl. 1). It is Jehovah's nature to help men when they seek His aid: "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (xli. 10). Not even their sins need discourage the people of Israel, for, says Jehovah, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions . . . and I will not remember thy sins" (xliv. 22; xliii. 25). The message of hope was first of a return from exile, a deliverance which would exceed the marvels of the exodus from Egypt (xliii. 16-21). Everywhere nature will reflect the joys of God's people (xli. 18, 19; xliii. 19). Palestine will be transfigured as an Eden (li. 3), and Zion, surprised at the numbers of her children, will ask, "Who hath begotten these?" (xlix. 21). All evil is to be removed; there is to be no more violence or destruction in the land (lx. 18); sorrow and sighing are to flee away, and the presence of Jehovah is to be enjoyed in all its fullness. It is an ideal picture. The message of hope is addressed first to Israel, but the blessings of the new age are not to be confined to Israel. The ends of the earth are to share in them (xlv. 22). It is the prophetic picture of the redemption of humanity, and hence Isaiah has also been called the Prophet of Universalism.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the local setting of Isaiah xl.-lxvi.?
2. Were there two Isaiahs?
3. What is Isaiah xl.-lxvi. sometimes called?
4. Give an analysis of the contents.
5. What is the significance of the "servant" passages?
6. What is the keynote of the prophecies in ch. xl.-lxvi.?
7. Why is Isaiah sometimes called the Prophet of Universalism?

LESSON XXIII

JEREMIAH, THE PROPHET OF THE INNER LIFE

(Jeremiah)

The next of the great prophets in order is **Jeremiah**, who has been called "the prophet of personal piety." Up to this point the writing prophets have been concerned primarily with the principles of religion as they applied to society and the nation. Jeremiah first gave religion a personal note. While he continued to address the nation as such, he, as one has put it, "first discovered the soul and its significance for religion."

1. **The Man.** Jeremiah was of a priestly family, whose home was Anathoth, three miles north of Jerusalem. The prophetic call came to him in 626 B. C., the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah. He was a young man then, for he protested that he was but "a child" (i. 6). His response to the divine call was very different from Isaiah's, but Isaiah was no doubt an older man, while Jeremiah was less self-reliant and confident of his powers. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." Jeremiah was "the weeping prophet," sensitive and sympathetic, realizing in his own personal life and experience the woe of his people. But he is not to be thought of as a weakling. "As man he melts in tears and pines away in sympathy; as the bearer of God's word he is firm and hard like pillar and wall, on which the storm of a nation's wrath breaks in vain."—*Orelli*.

2. **The Times.** Jeremiah lived through the last days of the kingdom of Judah and the fall of Jerusalem. The chief events during his ministry were:

(1) The discovery of the book of the law and the reformation which followed it, 621 B. C.

(2) The taking of Nineveh by the Scythians, 606 B. C.

(3) The defeat of Pharaoh-Necho at Carchemish, 604 B. C.

(4) The first siege of Jerusalem and deportation of inhabitants by Nebuchadnezzar, 597 B. C.

(5) The final siege and capture of Jerusalem, 586 B. C.

The kings of Judah under whom Jeremiah's prophetic activity occurred were:

(1) Josiah, 639-609 B. C. (2) Jehoiakim, 609-597 B. C. (3) Zedekiah, 597-586 B. C. Under Josiah Judah enjoyed practical freedom, though under the suzerainty of Assyria. Under Jehoiakim she was subject to (a) Egypt until 604, and (b) Babylon subsequently. Under Zedekiah she was a servile vassal to Babylon.

3. Jeremiah's Ministry. Jeremiah's ministry may be divided into three periods corresponding to the reigns of the three monarchs mentioned.

(1) Under Josiah Judah enjoyed comparative quiet, but Jeremiah had a vision of the coming of the dreaded Scythians (ii.-vi.), who took Nineveh. On this he based one of the strongest pleas for reformation to be found in the prophets. Concerning Jeremiah's relation to the reform of Josiah consequent upon the discovery of the law, 621 B. C., some take their cue from vii. 21-23 and viii. 8, and think that he had little confidence in the depth or nature of it; others find in xi. 14 evidence of an itinerant mission throughout Judah in support of the reformation. It would seem impossible that he should not sympathize with such a program and actively support it; although, as a largely external reformation, it may have led to an almost superstitious trust in the temple (vii. 4, 11, etc.), which did not mark a real return to Jehovah.

(2) Under Jehoiakim Jeremiah experienced rough treatment. He was in constant peril because of his oracles (xviii. 18; xx. 10), for he lifted up his voice against Zedekiah's alliance with Egypt. There was a false confidence in the temple expressed by the royal party which Jeremiah condemned, and for his words he was imprisoned (xx. 1). The king expressed his contempt of Jeremiah by destroying the roll of his prophecies (xxxvi.).

(3) The third period of Jeremiah's ministry fell in the reign of Zedekiah. The best part of the nation had now been carried into captivity (xxiv.). To the exiles Jeremiah wrote a letter counseling patience (xxvii.). To those still remaining in Jerusalem he counseled submission to Babylon. This brought him into conflict with the false prophets (xxviii.) and he was imprisoned. After the fall of Jerusalem he cast in his lot with Gedaliah, the Babylonian viceroy, at Mizpeh, where he continued to live until the governor was assassinated. After this he was carried into Egypt, and there, according to tradition, he met a martyr's death. His tomb is shown at Alexandria.

4. The Book of Jeremiah. The book of Jeremiah is different from other prophetic writings in being a combination of history, biography and prophecy. Since the first roll of his prophecies was burned, chapters i.-xxxvi. must be a second edition. The following analysis classifies the materials:

- (1) i. The prophet's call.
- (2) ii.-xxiv. Prophecies against Judah.
- (3) xxv.-xxix. Historical.
- (4) xxx.-xxxiii. Messianic.
- (5) xxxiv.-xlv. A series of separate speeches.
- (6) xlvi.-xlix. Prophecies against foreign nations.
- (7) l.-li. Prophecy against Babylon.
- (8) lii. An account of the capture of Jerusalem.

5. Jeremiah's Place Among the Prophets. Judged by ordinary standards Jeremiah might be called, as in fact he has been called, "the prophet of failure." His commission at the outset was "to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow" (i. 10). The message of doom is the dominant note. But these dismal messages are set over against what man ought to be. He is made for God. What instinct is to the birds that religion is to man (viii. 7). That Israel should forget Jehovah seemed to him contrary to the order of nature (ii. 32; xviii. 14 f.). The destruction of Jerusalem was not the last word of Jeremiah. Jehovah had a new covenant in store for His people (xxxii. 31-34). The prophet was also "to build and to plant." Religion is no longer to be dependent on outward institutions; the law is to be inwardly and individually appropriated (xxxii. 33). Jeremiah was, therefore, the prophet of the inner life. And in the course of time it came to be seen that, considered from the standpoint of pure religion, he was the greatest among the prophets. Soon his prophecy was given the first place among the prophets in the Hebrew canon. When, in the days of Christ, men were looking for Elijah to come, some said of Jesus that He was Jeremiah. He is "likest Christ" of all the Old Testament prophets.

QUESTIONS

1. Who was Jeremiah?
2. What kind of a man was he?
3. What was the situation in Judah in his day?
4. What were the chief external events in the time of his ministry?
5. What kings of Judah were his contemporaries?
6. What experiences did Jeremiah have under each?
7. Give an analysis of the book of Jeremiah.
8. What is Jeremiah's place among the prophets?

LESSON XXIV

EZEKIEL, THE PROPHET OF ESTABLISHED RELIGION

(Ezekiel)

Ezekiel was in a pre-eminent sense the prophet of the captivity. He interpreted it with the same statesmanlike grasp with which Isaiah interpreted the eighth century B. C.

1. **The Man.** Ezekiel was the son of Buzi, of whom nothing further is known. Ezekiel is styled "the priest," and in all probability was of the family of Zadok. He had the tastes and interests of a priest. He was interested in the temple and its ritual, and he places ritual offences side by side with moral offences (xxii. 8-12). The climax of his prophecy is reached in an ideal plan for the temple and the temple worship. It was his conviction that the best way to promote the interests of true religion was to conserve and purify temple worship. He is the champion of established religion. To this task he brought a highly sensitive personality. He was peculiarly the prophet of visions, and his visions took the form of trances (iii. 15, 26; xxiv. 25-27; xxxiii. 21 f.). In the august presence of Deity he was but a "son of man," a phrase that occurs one hundred and sixteen times in his prophecy.

2. **The Situation.** Ezekiel was one of the first deportation carried to Babylon, under Jehoiachin, in the year 597 B. C. He began to preach in 592, or one year after Jeremiah had relinquished the rôle of prophet. He states that it was "in the thirtieth year." If this refers to his age, he was a young man when taken captive. With a community of other exiles he settled at Tel-Abib, by the river Chebar, in the land of the Chaldeans. The community seems to have had a large degree of autonomy. The exiles possessed houses (iii. 24; xxxiii. 30), and there is no allusion to persecution. We know from Jeremiah xxix. that they were the élite of the nation, and by some means they kept in touch with Jerusalem, in whose welfare they were passionately interested. Ezekiel was married and occupied his own house (iii. 24; xxiv. 18), where he received the elders of the nation (viii. 1; xiv. 1; xx. 1). His wife died suddenly just before the fall of Jerusalem, and his failure to

observe the usual mourning he used as a sign to Judah (xxiv. 15 f.). The fall of Jerusalem wrought a change in the attitude of the people toward him and in the content of his message. Prior to this time there was suspicion and irritation on the part of the people, who believed they were being punished for the sins of their fathers, notwithstanding Ezekiel's insistence on individual responsibility (xviii.). After the fall of Jerusalem Ezekiel's message was predominantly one of consolation, and the people, disillusioned, came to trust him. How long this part of Ezekiel's ministry continued we do not know. The last date mentioned in his book is 570 B. C. It has been thought that he died shortly after this.

3. Ezekiel's Prophecies. The book of Ezekiel is to be divided, broadly, into two parts: (1) Chapters i.-xxiv. and (2) chapters xxxiii.-xlvi. Chapters xxv.-xxxii., the prophecies against foreign nations, form a connecting link, which may be taken either as a supplement to the preceding or as an introduction to the following chapters. The first half of the book is occupied with the doom of Jerusalem and Judah, the second half with the restoration. The book begins with an ecstatic vision in which the prophet receives his call to the "rebellious" exiles (i.-iii.). At once he plunges into his unwelcome message of judgment and doom, which is clothed in a variety of imagery. The dominant note here is that from the very day of her election Judah had been unfaithful, giving herself over to idolatry, immorality and the profanation of the institutions of Jehovah. The devouring fire shall consume and the sharp sword of Nebuchadnezzar will be drawn (xx.-xxiii.). The besieged city is at length captured, and, like the prophet's wife, perishes unmourned (xxiv.). The ministry of judgment being now over, the prophet can address himself to the more congenial task of reconstruction. In order to this, the hostile foreign nations must be removed; hence the seven oracles of xxv.-xxxii. With the removal of the nation's enemies the prophet begins his constructive work, which is given in a threefold idealistic picture of the future: (1) A vision of Jehovah's care for His flock and the power of His Spirit (xxxiii.-xxxvii.); (2) Israel's supremacy over symbolical foes, after the Messianic era has been introduced (xxxviii., xxxix.); and (3) a restored nation with the temple in the midst (xl.-xlv.).

4. Ezekiel's Mission. Ezekiel has been called "the father of Judaism." This is true in the sense that he was the forerunner of Ezra and Nehemiah. He was pre-eminently the churchman among the Old Testament prophets. After the necessary de-

structive work of purification had been done he saw the place of the temple as a rallying point in the building up of a new nation and idealized it. As one has said, "Ritual in and of itself is no necessary part of genuine religion," but, on the other hand, "there are many non-essential things in religion that are necessary to make religion effective in the world." In the course of its history the religion of Israel faced two great crises: the destruction of Jerusalem and the conquests of Alexander the Great. In the first, when it would have been natural for Israel to have reasoned that her God had forsaken her, Ezekiel moralized and universalized the conception of Jehovah, and by offering a positive program saved the remnant of the nation from apostasy. In the second, when every other religion in southwestern Asia was yielding to Greek naturalism, the legalism of Ezekiel held Israel fast. "What saved Israel's religion from falling a prey to Greek thought and arms was the fact that it had been crystalized into law, and so had been made 'hard as steel and strong as iron.'"

QUESTIONS

1. Who was Ezekiel? What was his personality?
2. What was the scene of his prophetic work?
3. What was the condition of the exiles?
4. What was Ezekiel's relation to them?
5. Give an analysis of the book of Ezekiel.
6. What was the mission of Ezekiel?

LESSON XXV

THE REMAINING PROPHETS

The remaining prophets can be considered but briefly. We shall consider them as far as possible in chronological order.

Micah, whose date is about 724 B. C., was a younger contemporary of Isaiah, and belongs to the Assyrian period. Like Amos, he was a plain countryman from the uplands of Judah. Jeremiah (xxvi. 17 ff.) tells us that the reformation of Hezekiah was due to the preaching of Micah. Micah denounces with fiery earnestness the sins of the capital cities, Samaria, in the northern kingdom, and Jerusalem, in the southern. Micah is a prophet of judgment; but his Messianic prophecies are of great value, especially v. 2, 3. Micah vi. 8 is one of the great texts of the Old Testament.

Zephaniah. Hezekiah was succeeded on the throne of Judah by Manasseh, whose long reign of fifty-five years is one of the darkest chapters in the history of that kingdom. In 642 B. C. the Scythians (Jer. iv.-vi; Ez. xxxviii.) swept over Asia. Zephaniah was a prince of the royal house, and during the minority of Josiah he delivered his famous prophecy of the *Dies iræ*. The thunders of the last judgment are heard; but the prophecy ends with Messianic consolation.

Nahum. The prophecy of Nahum has for its sole object the destruction of Nineveh. It was written about 625 B. C., when the Medes made their first attack upon Nineveh.

Habakkuk. The book of Habakkuk also belongs to this series. The theme is the destruction of Nineveh. Assyria, which had been used of Jehovah for the judgment of Israel, was itself to be judged. Habakkuk's description of the Assyrian as a robber is classic (i. 13-17). "Habakkuk has a marked individuality both in style and tone; and one expression he employs (ii. 4) has become historical from the way it was adopted by St. Paul (Gal. iii. 11) and by Luther, in the great question of justification by faith."—*Robertson*.

Daniel. The scene shifts to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar died in

561 B. C. Destiny denied him a worthy son. The Chaldean dynasty came to an end, and the priests of Babylon placed Nabonidus, "a pious and peaceful archæologist," on the throne. He left the military direction of his kingdom to his general, Belshazzar. The new power under which Babylon was to crumble was Cyrus the Persian. In 539, Gobryus, the Persian general and satrap of Assyria, met and defeated the Babylonians, and Belshazzar was slain. Nabonidus fled to the castle of Borsippa, and Gobryus entered Babylon without a struggle. Babylon fell November 3d, 538. Later Cyrus entered the city in triumph and was hailed as deliverer. Gobryus was the "Darius the Mede" of the book of Daniel. One of the captives of Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim was Daniel, who came to high office under Cyrus. The facts of Daniel's ministry occupy chapters i.-vi., in which we have also Nebuchadnezzar's dream and the interpretation of it, which leads to Daniel's being cast into the den of lions. The second part of his prophecy gives an account of the four visions seen by Daniel, viz.: (a) That of the four beasts coming up from the sea (vii.)—the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Alexander the Great and Rome; (b) that of the ram overcome by the he-goat (viii.)—the Medo-Persian empire overthrown by Alexander the Great; (c) the seventy years of Jeremiah (ix.); (d) the revelations of the angel.

Haggai. Prophecy slumbered until the year 520 B. C. Fifty thousand Israelites had returned to Jerusalem under Sheshbazzar by the permission of Cyrus, as Isaiah had predicted (xliv. 28). The year 520 seems to have brought famine and hunger in the land. At this crisis the venerable Haggai appeared and urged Zerubbabel to undertake the building of the temple. Haggai (i. 15) tells us that the work was begun on the 24th of December, in the second year of Darius, or 520 B. C.

Zechariah. Contemporaneous with Haggai appeared Zechariah. His book has the same subject, the rebuilding of the temple. In a series of visions interpreted by an angel Zechariah brings encouragement to Zerubbabel, the prince, and to Joshua, the priest. The keynote of Zechariah's prophecy is, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith Jehovah" (iv. 6). Zechariah also predicted the coming of Jehovah's servant, the Branch. Predictions of the coming of the king of Zion (viii. 9) had fulfillment in the Palm Sunday entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem.

Malachi. The new temple was completed in March, 515 B. C. It did not compare in splendor with the temple of Solomon, and

the life of the returned exiles had been a struggle. The temple worship had become half-hearted. Even the priests were guilty of presenting inferior offerings. Malachi's prophecy is a challenge to men perplexed and disappointed, presenting God's side of the situation and predicting the coming of One who will purify His temple. Malachi abounds in Messianic predictions (iii. 1; iv. 1, 2).

There are three prophets whose dates cannot be certainly assigned.

Joel, — B. C. Joel was a prophet of Judah, and his home was in Jerusalem, or its vicinity. There is no clue to his date in the book or in the Bible or in external literature. He lived and prophesied either in the period before Assyria had appeared as a menacing cloud, or at a very late time when even the memory of Babylonian cruelty had been forgotten. From a comparison of Joel iii. 16 with Amos i. 2 it would seem as if he antedated Amos. His prophecy was occasioned by a severe visitation of drought and locusts, which led him to deliver two highly pictorial discourses (i., ii.), calling for repentance. The plague is removed (ii. 18-27); and this leads to the prediction that "afterward" the Spirit will be poured out on all flesh, and with signs in heaven and on earth shall come the great and terrible "day of the LORD."

Obadiah, — B. C., in twenty-one verses—the shortest of all the prophetic books—predicts the annihilation of Edom, which is contrasted with the restoration of "the house of Jacob," who are to possess Edom and Philistia and enjoy the promises of the Messiah.

Jonah, — B. C., the son of Amittai (i. 1) is identical with the prophet described in 2 Kings xiv. 25. He lived in the reign of Jeroboam II. The book is a narrative of the story of Jonah, which is familiar. In some respects it is the greatest book of the Old Testament, the writer's object being to proclaim the universal character of God's love, and to show that it was not limited to Israel alone, but extended even to the heathen, if they were willing to abandon their evil courses and turn in penitence to Him.

QUESTIONS

1. Give the date and mission of Micah?
2. What was the occasion of Zephaniah's prophecy?
3. What is the theme of Habakkuk's prophecy?

4. For what special text is it noted?
5. What are the contents of the book of Daniel?
6. At what time did Haggai prophesy, and what was his message?
7. What was the mission of Zechariah?
8. What was the message of Malachi to his contemporaries?
9. What was the occasion of Joel's prophecy? His message?
10. What is the burden of Obadiah's prophecy?
11. What is the main teaching of the book of Jonah?

LESSON XXVI

THE POETRY OF THE BIBLE

1. The Poetical Sections. Much more of the Bible is poetry than one would learn from the Authorized Version. The printing of the Authorized Version does not show what is poetry and what is not. One of the advantages of the Revised Version is that this is indicated by the printing. Most of the poetry of the Bible is found in the Old Testament. The poetical books, as we have learned, are Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs, though Lamentations is to be included here and much of the Prophets, and, perhaps, Ruth and Esther. Besides these there are occasional songs which are introduced in the historical books:

The Song of the Sword (Lamech)	Gen. iv. 23, 24.
The Blessing of Jacob	Gen. xlix. 1-27.
The Song of Moses	Ex. xv. 1-18.
The Song of the Well.....	Num. xxi. 17, 18.
The Song of the War-Flame	Num. xxi. 27-30.
The Farewell Song of Moses	Deut. xxxii. 1-43.
The Song of Deborah	Judges v.
The Song of Hannah	1 Sam. ii. 10.
The Song of the Bow (Saul and Jonathan) ..	2 Sam. i. 17-27.
The Last Words of David	2 Sam. xxiii. 1-3.

The Prophets abound in poetry; indeed, so large is the prophetic element that some scholars have suggested that the original prophetic utterances were all in the form of poetry. There is comparatively little poetry in the New Testament. The Magnificat of Mary (Luke i. 46-55), the prophecy of Zacharias (Luke i. 68-77), the Beatitudes (Matt. v. 3-12) and probably some passages in Revelation are the only original poetry in the New Testament.

2. Form and Kinds of Biblical Poetry. The poetry of the Bible is not in the form of rhyme or meter—though something approaching rhyme is sometimes to be found at the end of lines—but in the form of parallelism. “After a statement has been made in the first line of the verse it is repeated, enlarged, or balanced by the state-

ments of the remaining line or lines." The second member of the parallelism is a sort of echo of the first. This form of expression was peculiarly adapted to express the emotions; and as poetry consists more in the sense than in the sound of words, Hebrew poetry loses less in translation than most poetry.

The Hebrew mind was given to reflection and introspection, hence Hebrew poetry is almost entirely either lyric or gnomic. Lyric poetry is the delineation of emotion in song; gnomic poetry "consists of observations on human life and society, or generalizations respecting conduct and character." Of the former class are the Psalms; of the latter, Proverbs.

3. The Psalms. The Psalter was the hymn-book of the second temple. It is arranged in five books. Each book ends with a doxology, and Psalm cl. is the doxology for the entire collection. The Psalter is divided as follows:

Book 1.....	Psalms i. to xli.
Book 2.....	Psalms xlii. to lxxii.
Book 3.....	Psalms lxxiii. to lxxxix.
Book 4.....	Psalms xc. to cvi.
Book 5.....	Psalms cvii. to cl.

Of the 150 Psalms, 100 are assigned by inscriptions to authors as follows: David, the sons of Korah, Asaph, Solomon, Ethan, Moses. These inscriptions were not a part of the original text, though attached prior to the time of the Septuagint, and we cannot determine authorship from them; but they represent a very ancient tradition which is probably correct.

Luther called the Psalter "a small Bible wherein all that stands in Scripture is fairly and briefly comprehended." It is a striking fact, of all the quotations which in the New Testament are made from the Old touching Christ and His kingdom nearly half are from the Psalter.

4. The Wisdom Literature. (a) The book of **Proverbs** introduces us to the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament. The name "wisdom" was applied by the Hebrews to an acute kind of observation and remark, a wise generalization on life. Though many of the proverbs of Solomon are religious, in the main they are maxims of worldly wisdom and ethics, having a practical aim. The book is divided into five parts:

1. The Proverbs of Solomon in Praise of Wisdom. Chapters i. to ix.

2. Sundry Proverbs of Solomon. Chapters x. to xxii. 16.
3. Sundry Precepts and Warnings. Chapters xxii. 17 to xxiv. 34.
4. Proverbs of Solomon copied out by Hezekiah. Chapters xxv. to xxix.
5. The Oracle of Agur and of Lemuel. Chapters xxx. and xxxi.

(b) The Book of **Job** also belongs to the Wisdom literature. The book takes its name from its principal character. The subject of the book is the most difficult question of human life, Why do the righteous suffer? and its aim is "to controvert the theory, dominant at the time when it was written, that suffering is a sign of the Divine displeasure, and presupposes sin on the part of the sufferer." Prof. Delitzsch has well said: "The real content of the Book of Job is the mystery of the Cross: the Cross of Golgotha is the solution of the enigma of every cross; and the Book of Job is a prophecy of this final solution." The book is divided thus:

1. Prologue in prose..... Chapters i. and ii.
2. First cycle of addresses..... Chapters iii. to xiv.
3. Second cycle of addresses..... Chapters xv. to xxi.
4. Third cycle of addresses..... Chapters xxii. to xxxi.
5. Argument of Elihu..... Chapters xxxii. to xxxvii.
6. Jehovah speaks..... Chapters xxxviii. to xli.
7. Epilogue in prose..... Chapter xlii.

5. **The Rolls.** The rolls are five short books which are publicly read in the synagogues at certain sacred seasons.

(a) *The Song of Songs* is read at the Passover. It is a love-song, which celebrates the love of man for woman and of woman for man. Allegorically it has been taken as a picture of the love of Jehovah for His people.

(b) *Ruth* is read at Pentecost, and is a prose-poem conserving a precious link of history in the ancestry of Jesus Christ.

(c) *Lamentations* is read on the 9th of Ab (June), the day on which Jerusalem was destroyed. It consists of five independent poems, all dealing with a common theme, viz.: the calamities which befell Judah and Jerusalem in consequence of the siege and capture of the city by the Chaldeans.

(d) *Ecclesiastes* is read at the feast of Tabernacles. It may be taken as a soliloquy on the question, Is life worth living?

(e) *Esther* is read at the feast of Purim. It gives the historic origin of that feast and suggests motives why it should be observed.

QUESTIONS

1. What parts of the Bible are in poetry?
2. Of what kinds is the poetry of the Bible?
3. What is the Psalter? Divisions? Authors?
4. What is the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament?
5. What are the contents of the Book of Proverbs?
6. What is the subject of the Book of Job?
7. What are the Rolls? When read?

LESSON XXVII

THE GOSPELS: LIFE OF CHRIST

(Books: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)

I. THE GOSPELS

1. Name and Place. At the head of the New Testament stand the four Gospels. This position has been fitly assigned to them, not because they come first in point of time,* but because they contain a record of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, which forms the corner-stone of Christianity, it being essentially the religion of a great fact. The word Gospel is the English translation of a Greek word meaning "good tidings," a word originally applied to Christ's preaching (Matt. iv. 23; Mark i. 15), and that of the apostles (1 Cor. ix. 16). Very early it came also to be applied to the books containing the facts of Christ's life, and by the middle of the second century these four memoirs held a pre-eminent place.

2. Why Four Gospels? The question naturally suggests itself, Why four Gospels? The number is not without reason. These records were not needlessly multiplied. There was probably a common source, a written record of the events of Christ's life which was in the possession of the apostles, the result of some years of active preaching, from which all the writers drew in making their monographs. Their aim was to make Christ a living reality to a certain type of mind. Men differed then as now; what appeals to one does not appeal to another. It would have been little short of miraculous if one Gospel could have reached the heart of that day. But four did, and they continue to be adequate. The Gospel according to **Mark** is the earliest and reflects Peter's thought. It emphasizes *the strenuousness of the life and ministry of Christ*, the side which would appeal most strongly to the Roman type of mind. The characteristic word is "straightway." It presents Jesus the Saviour in His power and activity. The Gospel according to **Matthew**, on the other hand, emphasizes primarily *the kingdom of*

* The Epistles were written earlier, and that is the reason they are placed first in the Church lessons.

Christ, looks backward to Messianic prophecies and forward to Messianic triumph. It traces Christ's ancestry to Abraham, and it dwells upon the return of Christ for the judgment of the world. It appealed primarily to those who had been brought up amid Jewish influences. The Gospel according to **Luke** presents still another phase of Christ's life. It is the story of Jesus as "*the loving Saviour of the world*, the sympathetic friend of all classes and nationalities." Luke's genealogy of Jesus goes back to Adam. The hymns which were inspired by His nativity make continual reference to His influence on all men. The Christ of Luke is "the Saviour for all mankind, for the wideness of humanity—a world-wide Saviour"—a Gospel for the Greek type of mind. The Gospel according to **John** is still different. It was addressed to those already claiming to be Christians, a book of meditation and devotion. It deals with *the hidden things of Christ's divine nature*. It presents "the Saviour for the inner life, for our reflection, meditation and devotion."

3. **Authorship and Dates.** Just when these four Gospels were written we do not know with certainty, nor is it important that we should. All scholars agree that Mark's Gospel was written first, probably at Rome, about 67 A. D. (Zahn). The same scholars who attribute the first Gospel to Matthew the apostle state that he wrote it first in Hebrew, or Aramaic. From the materials in this *Logia* of Matthew, as it is called, and Mark's Gospel, the Gospel of Matthew was written about 70 A. D. Luke, who, in addition to the foregoing material, had the benefit of Paul's memoranda, wrote his Gospel about 75 A. D. (Zahn). The influence of Paul is traced in such parts as the parables of the Lost Coin, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Son, and the Good Samaritan, and the stories of the woman who was a sinner, and the penitent thief. The Gospel of John, written somewhere between 80 and 90 A. D., supplements the other three in giving us the Judean ministry of Jesus, which the others omit, and many of His most illuminating discourses, together with the raising of Lazarus and a fuller account of the trial and the post-resurrection days of Jesus. This Gospel is an interpretation, enabling us to answer the question, What think ye of Christ?

II. THE LIFE OF CHRIST

1. **Early Years.** Jesus Christ came into the world under Cæsar Augustus, the first Roman emperor, before the death of King Herod the Great, four years prior to the beginning of our Christian era.*

* Our Christian era, which was introduced by the Roman abbot, Dionysius

He was born of a Jewish virgin, Mary by name, of the line of David, in Bethlehem, in fulfillment of an ancient prophecy (Micah v. 2). The world was at peace, as was fitting at the advent of the Prince of Peace. Angels sang hymns of adoration which were heard by shepherds in the neighborhood keeping watch over their flocks (Luke ii. 8-14). Jesus was circumcised the eighth day (Luke ii. 21), in fulfillment of Jewish ritual, and His name was called "*Jesus*," the Greek form of *Joshua*, meaning *Saviour*, as the angel of the annunciation had directed Mary (Matt. i. 21). Sages of the East, directed by a remarkable conjunction of the planets, came to Jerusalem, seeking Him, bringing Him gifts (Matt. ii. 1, 2, 11). He was rescued from the hand of Herod by being carried into Egypt (Matt. ii. 13-15). After Herod's death, He was brought back to Nazareth, where His childhood was spent (Matt. ii. 23).

2. Youth. The youth of Jesus is veiled in mystery. The only reference to it in Scripture is Luke ii. 40, 52. His home was that of a workingman, as Joseph was a carpenter. Later He was known both as "the carpenter's son," and as Himself a carpenter. As a youth of twelve He went with Joseph and Mary to Jerusalem to the great Feast of the Passover (Luke ii. 41-50), after which He returned to Nazareth, and for eighteen years was subject to Joseph and Mary (Luke ii. 51).

3. Manhood. At the age of thirty, after Messianic ordination by baptism (Matt. iii. 13-17), and Messianic probation in the wilderness (iv. 1-11), He entered upon His public ministry. That ministry lasted only three years, and yet into those three years is condensed "the deepest meaning of the history of religion." His life was limited to the little country of Palestine; only twice did He pass beyond it (Matt. ii. 13, xv. 21). He had no home, no earthly possessions, no friend among the mighty and the rich (Luke ix. 58; Matt. xxvii. 35). A few devout women from time to time filled

Exiguus, in the sixth century, puts the Nativity December 25th, 754 A. U. (from the founding of the city of Rome). Nearly all chronologers agree that this is wrong by at least four years, for the following reasons: (1) According to Matt. ii. 1, Jesus was born in the days of Herod the Great, who, according to Josephus, died 750 A. U., just before the Passover. (2) There was a remarkable conjunction of the planets Jupiter, Saturn and Mars in 748-750 A. U., bringing into prominence a new fixed star of great brilliancy, now generally accepted as the explanation of Matt. ii. 2. (3) "The fifteenth year of Tiberias" has been quite certainly fixed as 749 A. U. (4) The first census of Cyrenius (Quirinus), Luke ii. 2, has been placed in 750 A. U., it having been proved by scholars that Cyrenius (Quirinus) was twice governor of Palestine.

His purse (Luke viii. 3), and this purse was in the hands of a thief and a traitor (John xii. 6). He associated with publicans and sinners to raise them to a higher and nobler life, and began His reformation among the lowly (Matt. ix. 12, 13). He chose twelve apostles for the Jews (Matt. x. 6) and seventy disciples for the Gentiles (Luke x. 1). He did not spare sin and vice, aiming His severest words at the self-righteous hypocrites who sat in Moses' seat (Matt. xxiii.). He foretold to His disciples His crucifixion, and promised to them in this life only the same baptism of blood (Mark viii. 31-33, x. 28-30). He went about in Palestine, often weary of travel, but never weary of His work of love (John iv. 6, 34), doing good to the souls and bodies of men, speaking words of spirit and life, and working miracles of power and mercy (John vi. 63; Matt. iv. 23, xiv. 14). At last, hated and persecuted by the Jewish hierarchy, betrayed into their hands by one of His own apostles (Matt. xxvi. 3, 14), rejected by the people (Matt. xxvii. 21), but declared innocent by the representative of Roman law and justice (John xix. 6), He was crucified with malefactors (Matt. xxvii. 35, 38). The third day He rose from the grave (John xx. 1; Mark xvi. 6). He repeatedly appeared to His disciples, commissioned them to preach the gospel of the resurrection to every creature (Matt. xxviii. 18-20), and ascended to the right hand of God in heaven (Mark xvi. 19).

QUESTIONS

1. What is the meaning of the word Gospel?
2. How many books bear this title?
3. Why four Gospels?
4. What characterizes the Gospel by Mark?
5. What characterizes the Gospel by Matthew?
6. What characterizes the Gospel by Luke?
7. What characterizes the Gospel by John?
8. When and under what circumstances was Jesus born?
9. What do we know about His youth?
10. What, about His manhood?

LESSON XXVIII

GOSPEL HISTORY: CHRIST'S MINISTRY

(Books: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)

The way for Christ's public ministry was prepared by John the Baptist, who came in appearance like another Elijah (Matt. iii. 4), preaching repentance to his nation, and baptizing the penitents at the fords of the Jordan (Matt. iii. 6). Thither Jesus came and was baptized of John, "to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. iii. 13-17), the Holy Spirit bearing witness that He was the Son of God. Then followed His threefold temptation in the desert of Judea (Matt. iv. 1-11), the call of His first disciples (John i. 35-42), and His return to Galilee (John i. 43-51), where He showed His first sign of power (John ii. 1-11).

The three years of Christ's ministry are usually designated as: (1) The Year of Obscurity; (2) the Year of Popularity; (3) The Year of Opposition.

1. **The Year of Obscurity**, strange to say, was passed mainly in Judea, in the very shadow of the nation's capital (John i.-iv.). It began with Jesus' visit to Jerusalem for the Passover, when He expelled the money-changers from the temple (John ii. 13-25). It includes Jesus' interview with Nicodemus, to whom He made the most significant statement the world has ever heard (John iii. 16). In this year, also, comes the interview with the woman of Samaria, to whom Jesus declared Himself the Messiah of God (John iv. 26), and through whom many Samaritans were brought to Him as disciples. The year closes with His return to Cana and His healing of the nobleman's son (John iv. 46-54). He had not yet begun to speak in parables.

2. **The Year of Popularity** was spent in Galilee. After His return He settled at Capernaum, and devoted Himself exclusively to His ministry (Matt. iv. 13 ff.). This was a year of miracles. A great number were recorded, and there must have been a larger number that were not recorded (Mark i. 29-34). His ministry about the Lake of Galilee was marked by the Sermon on the Mount and many parables, following His choice of the Twelve as apostles (Matt. x. 2-4) whom He sent out on a missionary journey, which

was the beginning of their own work in His name (Matt. x.). In this year also began the serious opposition of the Pharisees, who were offended because He ate with publicans and sinners—to whom He made the great declaration of His mission (Matt. ix. 12, 13). This year closes with the feeding of the five thousand in the region east of Galilee (Mark vi. 41) and the notable discourse spoken to representatives of the same multitude in the synagogue at Capernaum (John vi. 22-58), which was the occasion of Peter's first great confession (John vi. 69).

3. The Year of Opposition. Scribes and Pharisees direct from Jerusalem now sought Him out with increasing hostility (Matt. xv. 1), and Jesus could no longer trust Himself in Judea (John vii. 1). He therefore retired into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, returning through Decapolis and feeding four thousand in a mountain near the Sea of Galilee (Mark vii. 24, viii. 1-9). Crossing the Sea of Galilee to Dalmanutha (Mark viii. 10), He immediately encountered the opposition of the Pharisees again, so that He took ship and recrossed the lake (Mark viii. 13). He now took the disciples into the region of Cæsarea Philippi, where He was transfigured and Peter made his great confession (Matt. xvii. 1-13; Mark ix. 2-13; Luke ix. 28-36). He now openly spoke of His death and resurrection. He went to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, and, teaching boldly in the temple and declaring Himself the light of the world, the Jews sought to stone Him (John viii.). Out of these last colloquies with His enemies came some of His most precious words—the parables of the Good Samaritan, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son. A third attempt of the Jews to stone Him drove Him into Perea, from whose seclusion He came only to raise Lazarus from the dead (John xi. 17-46).

4. The Passion. The last Passover brings Jesus to the week of His passion, related in all the Gospels with remarkable fullness. "To the three years and more of His public ministry, the four evangelists give in all fifty-five chapters. But to these eight days they give thirty chapters."—(*Schauffler.*) This is most significant. The Passion begins with the Triumphal Entry (Mark xi. 8-11) and ends with the Crucifixion (Matt. xxvii. 38). The chief events between are the Last Supper (Luke xxii. 14-20), the Agony in the Garden (Luke xxii. 44), and the Trial (John xviii.). The culminating act of Jesus' ministry was His death, about which more is said in the New Testament than about all the service of His life.

5. The Resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus is also told by all

four evangelists (Matt. xxviii. 1-8; Mark xvi. 1-8; Luke xxiv. 1-11; John xx. 1, 2). Eleven appearances to His disciples are recorded: (1) To Mary (John xx. 11-18); (2) to the women (Matt. xxviii. 9); (3) to Peter (Luke xxiv. 34); (4) to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13-33); (5) to the Eleven, Thomas being absent (John xx. 19-25); (6) to the Eleven, Thomas being present (John xx. 26-29); (7) to the seven disciples by the sea (John xxi.); (8) to the Eleven in a mountain in Galilee (Matt. xxviii. 16); (9) to the five hundred brethren (1 Cor. xv. 6), possibly identical with (8); (10) to James (1 Cor. xv. 7); (11) to the disciples on Olivet (Luke xxiv. 50-53).

6. **The Ascension.** Forty days after His resurrection Jesus ascended into heaven (Acts i. 9-12), where He reigns till He shall have put all enemies under His feet (1 Cor. xv. 25).

QUESTIONS

1. Who prepared the way for Christ's public ministry?
2. How are the three years of His ministry usually designated?
3. Where was the year of obscurity chiefly spent?
4. What great sayings of Jesus do we locate in this year?
5. Where was the year of popularity spent?
6. What was the chief scene of Jesus' miracles?
7. What precious words of Jesus do we locate in this year?
8. What order of the ministry did Jesus establish in this year?
9. Name the twelve apostles.
10. What opposition did Jesus' popularity engender?
11. What great confession did this opposition lead to?
12. Trace the career of Jesus during the year of opposition.
13. What great event and confession marks this year?
14. What priceless parables do we owe to Jesus' enemies?
15. What does the Passion include?
16. What prominence is given to it in the Gospels?
17. How many appearances of Christ after His resurrection are recorded?
18. What occurred forty days after the resurrection?
19. Where is Jesus now?

LESSON XXIX

APOSTOLIC HISTORY: THE EARLY CHURCH

(BOOK: The Acts i. to xii.)

1. The Birthday of the Church. Jesus' last command was that His disciples should wait for the descent of the Holy Spirit at Jerusalem, and then be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts i. 8). The eleven, with the women, Mary, the mother of Jesus, and His brethren, continued in prayer for the Holy Spirit with one accord, "in the upper room" (i. 14). On the proposal of Peter, Matthias was chosen by lot, in the place of Judas, to be one of the apostles, a witness of the resurrection (i. 8, 11, 14, 15-26). On Pentecost (the fiftieth day after the Resurrection, the tenth after the Ascension), commemorative of the giving of the Law, the Holy Spirit descended with the sound as of a rushing mighty wind, and tongues like as of fire, "and it sat upon each of them" (Acts ii. 2, 3). This was *the birthday of the Christian Church*. The new law of Christ was written upon the hearts of His disciples. This endowment of power was manifested in the mighty preaching of Peter to the assembly of Jews and proselytes, to whom he boldly declared the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the divine proof of His Messiahship, and in the consequent conversion and baptism of three thousand souls (ii. 41).

2. Early Persecutions. The Church started as a society at Jerusalem, where the members had all things in common (ii. 44). They were just emerging from Judaism and worshiped in private houses and in the temple. Few of the thousands converted by Peter's preaching were residents, and those who were probably attracted little attention. The first occasion of publicity was the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the temple by Peter (iii. 6), and Peter's insistence that it was by the power of Jesus that the cure had been wrought (iv. 19). For their boldness Peter and John were imprisoned and threatened by the Sanhedrin, but they continued their work of preaching Christ and healing in His name. Arrested a second time, they were beaten by order of the council,

and, on the plea of Gamaliel, let go, "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name" (v. 41). But through all this opposition the Church prospered (iv. 4).

3. Deacons Ordained—Stephen. The Greek-speaking Jews murmured against the Hebrews "because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." Where no provision for the poor and aged was made by the state, their care was one of the problems of a religious body. The apostles, declining to leave "the ministry of the word for serving tables," called the body of the disciples together and asked them to elect seven qualified men, whom they ordained for this practical service (vi. 1-7). By this arrangement "the word of God increased," "the number of the disciples multiplied," and "a great company of the priests" believed. The most conspicuous of the seven deacons was Stephen, whose preaching stirred up such opposition in the synagogues that the Jews suborned men to say that they had heard him speak blasphemy. Stephen's defence, in which he reviewed the history of the Hebrew nation as a prophecy of the coming of Jesus, is one of the most notable utterances in the New Testament (vi., vii.). "Cut to the heart" and "gnashing their teeth," his hearers stoned him to death. Stephen's prayer, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," bore fruit in the conversion of Saul, a witness consenting to his death (viii. 1).

4. General Persecution. A general persecution now scattered all the disciples through Judea and Samaria, except the apostles (viii. 1); but as the storm scatters the seed far and wide, so the scattered disciples, wherever they went, preached the word (viii. 4). Saul, as a member of the Sanhedrin (xxvi. 10), made havoc of the Church. Some of the scattered Christians ultimately traveled as far as Phenice, Cyprus and Antioch (xi. 19). Philip, a deacon, preached Christ in Samaria; many believed and were baptized. Peter and John, from Jerusalem, followed up the work, confirming the converts by the laying on of hands, the beginning of the Church's rite of confirmation (viii. 17). John, who once would have called fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans, now calls upon the Holy Spirit to confirm them. But false conceptions of the new faith, as in the case of Simon Magus, the father of heresy, are quickly exposed (viii. 14-25). Philip was now sent by the angel of the Lord to Gaza, and was instrumental in the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch (viii. 26-40).

5. The Arch-Persecutor Converted. The arch-persecutor of the Christian Church was Saul of Tarsus, by his own confession (Gal. i.

13, 23; 1 Tim. i. 13; Acts xxvi. 11). Commissioned from Jerusalem by the high priest to imprison any Christians he should find at Damascus, on his way thither he was arrested by a bright light and a voice from heaven, which said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Asking what he should do, he was directed to Ananias, of Damascus, a convert from Judaism, who was the instrument of giving him light (ix.). Saul, immediately after his baptism, preached Christ in the synagogue of Damascus and in Jerusalem.

6. Breaking Down of the Middle Wall of Partition. This took place in Cæsarea, and the agent was Peter. Up to this time no Gentile might come into the Church of God except by the way of the Gate of the Proselyte. He must submit to Jewish ordinances and customs before he could be one of the covenant people. Without circumcision it seemed impossible to the apostles that a man could become a member of the Church. This was Peter's position until he received the vision on the house top at Joppa (x.). A similar vision was sent to Cornelius, a Roman centurion, at Cæsarea, who was instructed to send for Peter. The baptism of Cornelius was the Pentecost of the Gentiles. By the gift of the Holy Spirit to him God showed that the wall of partition between races was henceforth broken down.

7. Herod's Persecution. Herod Agrippa I., grandson of Herod the Great, made king of Abilene by Caligula, to which Galilee and Perea were added on the exile of Herod Antipas, and Judea and Samaria by Claudius—so that his kingdom was as large as that of Herod the Great—was a strict Jew. To please the Jews he "put forth his hands to afflict certain of the church." He slew James, and he imprisoned Peter, intending after the Passover to slay him also; but before he could carry out his wicked purpose Peter was miraculously delivered, and Herod was smitten with a fatal disease (xii.). Peter's imprisonment, however, compelled him to leave Jerusalem, and now all the Twelve are scattered.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the birthday of the Christian Church?
2. By what signs was it marked?
3. What was the condition of the first Church?
4. What led to the first persecution?
5. What was the office of the seven deacons?
6. What led to the first general persecution?
7. What was the beginning of the rite of confirmation?
8. What led to the conversion of Saul?
9. How was "the middle wall of partition" broken down?
10. What was the extent and significance of Herod's persecution?

LESSON XXX

APOSTOLIC HISTORY: EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH

(BOOK: The Acts xiii. to xxviii.)

1. The First Gentile Church. Antioch (in Syria) now became the center of the Church's activity and the base of her missionary operations. Men of Cyprus and Cyrene, scattered by the persecution following Stephen's death, came to Antioch and preached Jesus (Acts xi. 19-21), and "the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord." When the news of this missionary work reached the church at Jerusalem, Barnabas was sent to confirm the new converts, and, bringing Saul from Tarsus, he with his younger helper labored there a year, founding the first wholly Gentile church. That brought into the service of the Church the most powerful personality, after Jesus Christ, that has influenced its career, and the history of the Church's expansion is largely the history of his labors. The church in Antioch was worthy of such a leader, for it extended a helping hand to the famine-stricken brethren in Judea (xi. 27-30), and it was of the men who carried relief to Jerusalem from the Christians at Antioch that the Holy Spirit afterwards said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (xiii. 2). With this divine command the outward movement began.

2. First Missionary Journey (A. D. 47-49). From Antioch, Barnabas and Saul, taking John Mark as their helper, set sail for Cyprus, where Sergius Paulus, the proconsul, believed, notwithstanding the opposition of Elymas the sorcerer. Saul is now and henceforth Paul, marking the transition between his ministry to the Jews and to the Gentiles. From Cyprus they sailed to Asia Minor, landing at Perga, in Pamphylia, where John Mark forsook them for his home in Jerusalem. Thence they went to Antioch, in Pisidia, where, after preaching to the Jews in the synagogue in vain, they turned to the Gentiles. Driven away by the Jews, they went to Iconium. There a multitude of Jews and Greeks believed, but an attempt having been made to stone Paul and Barnabas, they fled to Lystra. Here the people were barely prevented from wor-

shipping them as gods, and then, inflamed by meddling Jews, they stoned Paul. The terminus of this missionary journey was Derbe in Galatia. After preaching the gospel in that city, where they made many converts, the missionaries retraced their steps, establishing the churches and setting elders over them, and, after an absence of eighteen months, reported their work to the church at Antioch, rehearsing "how God had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles" (Acts xiii., xiv.).

3. The Council at Jerusalem. The missionary work of Paul and Barnabas brought on the first great crisis in the history of the Church. They had been admitting Gentile believers to the fellowship of the Church through the door, not of circumcision, but of faith in Jesus Christ. But certain Judaizers went from Jerusalem to Antioch and began to teach, "Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses ye cannot be saved." The church at Antioch was immediately thrown into consternation, and Paul and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem to secure an official opinion by the mother church. The council was held in the year 49 or 50. It was the first, and, in some respects, the most important council in the history of Christendom. After due deliberation a letter was sent to the Gentile brethren in Syria and Cilicia repudiating the conduct of the Pharisaic teachers who had raised the issue, expressing joy at the work of Paul and Barnabas, but laying the fourfold injunction upon the Gentile Christians that they abstain from meats that had been sacrificed to idols, flesh with the blood in it, the flesh of strangled animals, and from fornication. The decree was accepted at Antioch, and thus a schism in the Church was averted (xv.).

4. Second Missionary Journey (A. D. 50-52). On this journey Paul was accompanied by Silas, Paul and Barnabas having separated because of Paul's unwillingness to take Mark with them. Starting at Antioch, they first made a tour of the cities touched in the first journey. They went into Galatia, and, restrained by the Spirit from preaching in proconsular Asia and Bithynia, to Troas, on the Ægean Sea. Here Paul and Silas were joined by Luke, and, responding to the vision of the man of Macedonia which came to Paul, they crossed into Europe. Paul preached the gospel with great success, first in Philippi, where Lydia and the jailer were converted; then in Thessalonica, where he was persecuted by the Jews, but left a flourishing church; then in Berea, where the converts won praise for their study of the Scriptures. In Athens, the literary capital of Greece, he preached to its philosophers on Mars'

Hill. In Corinth, the political capital and the commercial bridge between Europe and Asia, he spent eighteen months, and under great difficulties built up a church, which was honored with two of his most important epistles. In the spring of 54 he returned by way of Ephesus, Cæsarea and Jerusalem to Antioch.

5. Third Missionary Journey (52-55 or 56 A. D.). The third missionary journey centers in Ephesus, the renowned capital of pro-consular Asia and the seat of the worship of Diana, whither Paul went after revisiting the disciples in Phrygia and Galatia, and remained between two and three years. Here he established a strong church, to which one of his Epistles is addressed. The uprising caused by Demetrius the silversmith drove him away from Ephesus, and he revisited the churches in Macedonia and Achaia, spending three months in Corinth.

6. Arrests and Imprisonments. In the spring of 55 or 56 Paul went for the last time to Jerusalem by way of Miletus (xx. 16, 17), carrying alms for the poor brethren of Judea from the Christians of Greece. Here some fanatical Jews raised an uproar against him, during the feast of Pentecost, which would have resulted in his murder had not the Roman tribune rescued him. He was sent to the Roman procurator, Felix, in Cæsarea, where he was confined in prison two years awaiting his trial. Before Festus, who succeeded Felix, Paul, exercising his rights as a Roman citizen, appealed to Cæsar and was sent to Rome. He had a stormy voyage, suffering shipwreck, which detained him over winter at Malta. The spring following (59 or 60 A. D.) he reached Rome. Here he spent two years in easy confinement "in his own hired house," awaiting the decision of his case, surrounded by his friends and fellow-laborers, preaching the gospel to the soldiers of the imperial guard.

7. Martyrdom. Here the account of Acts ends. It would seem as if Paul had been released from his first imprisonment and had traveled again in the East (cf. 1 Tim. i. 3; 2 Tim. iv. 13, 20; Titus i. 5, iii. 12), if not to Spain, as he so much desired (Rom. xv. 24, 28). In 64 A. D. Paul was arrested, possibly at Miletus or Ephesus, and hurried to Rome (2 Tim. iv. 9-21), where he suffered martyrdom under Nero.

8. Summary of the Acts. It will be found valuable to master the following analysis of the Acts:

Introduction (i. 1-3).

I. The Founding of the Church (i. 4, ii. 47).

The ascension and the last instructions of Christ (i. 4-11); the

election of Matthias (i. 12-26). The Day of Pentecost and the state of the primitive Church (ii. 1-47).

II. The Church in Jerusalem (iii. to vii.).

Miracles, testimony and sufferings of Peter; the first persecutions (iii. to v. 42).

The election of deacons (vi. 1-7).

The acts of Stephen (vi. 8 to vii. 60).

III. The Church in Judea and Samaria (viii. to ix. 43).

The acts of Philip (viii.).

The conversion of Saul (ix. 1-30).

The acts of Peter at Lydda and Joppa (ix. 31-43).

IV. The Extension of Church Membership to the Gentiles (x. to xii.).

The vision of Peter and the conversion of Cornelius (x.).

Peter's defence to the church at Jerusalem (xi. 1-18).

The founding of the church at Antioch (xi. 19-30).

The second persecution and the judgment of Herod (xii.).

V. The Church among the Gentiles, and their relation to the Mother Church (xiii. to xv.).

First Missionary Journey of Paul and Barnabas through Cyprus, Pamphylia and Pisidia (xiii., xiv.).

The Council of Jerusalem (xv.).

VI. Extension of the Church in the Roman Empire (xvi. to xx.).

Second Missionary Journey of Paul, with Silas and Timothy, in Asia Minor and Europe (xv. 36 to xviii. 22).

Third Missionary Journey in Asia Minor, Macedonia and Greece, and Paul's Return to Jerusalem (xviii. 23 to xxi. 16).

VII. Final Acts of Paul (xxi. 17 to xxviii.).

His arrest, imprisonment and removal to Cæsarea (xxi. 17 to xxiii. 35).

Paul's defence before Felix and Festus (xxiv. to xxvi.).

Voyage, shipwreck and life at Rome (xxvii. and xxviii.).

QUESTIONS

1. What city now became the base of the Church's operations?
2. Who were the first ordained missionaries?
3. Trace Paul's first missionary journey. (See map.)
4. What was the occasion of the council at Jerusalem, and the outcome?

5. Trace Paul's second missionary journey. (See map.)
6. Trace Paul's third missionary journey. (See map.)
7. What occurred on Paul's last visit to Jerusalem?
8. Where did he suffer imprisonment?
9. What was the end of his life?
10. Give a synopsis of the Acts of the Apostles.

LESSON XXXI

THE EPISTLES

Of the twenty-seven books which compose the New Testament twenty-one are Epistles. This form of literature was common in the Roman world of the first Christian century, and it was natural that it should come into use in a community of young missionary churches whose founder could not remain with them. The Epistles of the New Testament are more than personal correspondence. They are the inspired exposition of the principles of Christianity. Some of these letters are elaborate theological essays; others are exhortations on the subject of practical duty; while still others are little more than personal notes. "Six are addressed to individuals, ten to local churches and five to Christians in general."

The Epistles naturally divide themselves into two classes; first, the Pauline; second, the General Epistles.

I. THE PAULINE EPISTLES

The epistles of St. Paul are the earliest literary relics of the New Testament. Only one other book is earlier. Their value was early recognized and they were gathered into a volume called the *Apostolicon*, containing all of the Pauline Epistles except those to Timothy and Titus. This was the earliest collection of New Testament writings of which we have any record. Probably some of Paul's letters are lost. In the Epistle to the Colossians he speaks of his "letter to the Laodiceans" (Col. iv. 16). That epistle has perished, and others doubtless have shared its fate.

The order of the Pauline Epistles in the Bible is meaningless and probably was determined only by the relative bulk of the writings. Arranged according to date the order, as nearly as we can determine, is:

	<i>Hastings.</i>	<i>Ramsay.</i>	<i>Zahn.</i>
1 and 2 Thessalonians.....	50 (late)	51 (late)	53 (late)
Galatians	52	53	53 (early)
1 and 2 Corinthians.....	55	56	57
Romans	57	57	58

	<i>Hastings.</i>	<i>Ramsay.</i>	<i>Zahn.</i>
Philippians }	59	60	63
Colossians }	..	..	62
Ephesians }	..	..	62
Philemon	61	62	62
1 Timothy }	64-65	65-67	65
Titus }	..	..	65
2 Timothy }	..	..	66

This order is most significant and helpful, for it indicates the three natural divisions of the Epistles—

(1) Those written during the period of Paul's missionary activity, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans.

(2) Those written during the Roman imprisonment, Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon.

(3) Those written after Paul's release, in the closing years of his life—the so-called pastoral epistles—1 Timothy, Titus, 2 Timothy.

1. *1 and 2 Thessalonians.* Thessalonica was a prosperous city on the Thermaic gulf. Here Paul established a church on the Second Missionary Journey, but was driven out by Jewish persecution. He wrote these epistles shortly afterward from the city of Corinth. They are full of the sort of counsel young converts from heathenism would need. The dominant thought is the coming of the Lord. The second letter was written to remove misunderstandings which had been caused by the first.

2. *Galatians.* This epistle is addressed not to an individual church, but to a group of churches. It was written at the close of the Second Missionary Journey from the city of Antioch. It was written to combat the influence of Judaic teachers who insisted that the observance of the Mosaic ritual was necessary to Christian discipleship.

3. *1 and 2 Corinthians.* Corinth was the commercial bridge of Asia and the political capital of Achaia in Paul's day. Here Paul founded a church on his Second Missionary Journey during a sojourn of eighteen months. He wrote 1 Corinthians from Ephesus and 2 Corinthians from Macedonia during the period of the Third Missionary Journey. These epistles reflect "the earliest conflict of Christianity with the culture and the vices of the ancient classical world." In them Paul combats "the false pride, the false knowledge, the false liberality, the false freedom, the false display, the false philosophy" of declining Greek culture. His allusions and illustrations are gathered from Greek and Roman life. Their purpose was

to curb Gentile license. The second letter contains considerable biographical material.

4. *Romans*. The Epistle to the Romans was written from the city of Corinth at the end of the Third Missionary Journey. It is a treatise on the power of faith. In substance "it is a justification of the apostle's mission to the Gentiles."

5. *Philippians*. This is probably the first epistle of the apostle's imprisonment. The church at Philippi was founded by him on the Second Missionary Journey. The letter is "a spontaneous expression of love and gratitude for the affectionate generosity of the Philippians." It is the only letter of Paul's which contains no word of rebuke or disappointment. The keynote is, Follow Christ.

6. *Colossians*, *Ephesians* and *Philemon* were written very close together in time and sent at the same time by Tychicus. The church at Colosse, a city of Phrygia, was not established by Paul, who classes the Colossians among those "who have not seen my face." The church was beset by the Gnostic heresy, which made of Jesus Christ a mere creature. The apostle's theme in this letter is the glory of Christ as the Head of the Universe. The Church at Ephesus was established by Paul on the Third Missionary Journey. The epistle is an exposition of the ideal church and lessons from this truth. The Epistle to Philemon is a private letter of Paul to Philemon, a resident of Colosse, concerning his runaway slave, Onesimus, who had made his way to Rome and there fallen under the influence of the apostle, under whom he appears to have been converted. Paul returns the slave to his master with this tender message.

7. *The Pastoral Epistles*. The two Epistles to Timothy and the Epistle to Titus are called "the pastoral epistles" because addressed to these friends of Paul in their capacity as pastors. They were written during the Roman period of the apostle's life. They contain pastoral theology of permanent value.

II. GENERAL EPISTLES

The first book of the New Testament to be written was the Epistle of *James*, the brother of our Lord, about the year 50 (Zahn), showing the relation between faith and works. *1 Peter*, written to encourage suffering Christians to be steadfast, dates about 64 (Zahn), while *2 Peter* was probably written two years earlier. The Epistle of *Jude*, another brother of our Lord, is assigned by Zahn to the year 75. The author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* is unknown,

but its purpose is to show the superiority of Christ. Its date is variously assigned from 70 (Westcott) to 80 (Zahn). The Epistles of *John* belong to the period 80 to 90, and Revelation to the year 95 (Zahn).

QUESTIONS

1. What is an epistle?
2. How many epistles are there?
3. How many are certainly Pauline?
4. Give the chronological order of the Pauline Epistles.
5. Into what three groups are they naturally divided?
6. What is the dominant thought of the Epistles to the Thessalonians?
7. What is the dominant thought of the Epistle to the Galatians?
8. What is the dominant thought of the Epistles to the Corinthians?
9. What is the dominant thought of the Epistle to the Romans?
10. What is the dominant thought of the Epistle to the Colossians?
11. What is the dominant thought of the Epistle to the Ephesians?
12. What was probably the first book of the New Testament?

LESSON XXXII

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE BIBLE

1. General Statement. The geography of the Bible is mainly concerned with the Holy Land, although it includes countries ranging from Italy to the Persian Gulf, and from the Caucasus mountain range to the extreme south of Arabia and the Nile Valley, an area extending from ten to forty-five degrees east longitude and from twenty-seven to forty-five degrees north latitude.

2. Lands Included. The geography of the Old Testament includes all of Western Asia between the Caspian, the Black and the Mediterranean Seas and the Persian Gulf, together with the land of Egypt. The following lands should be located on the map: **Armenia** (R. V., Ararat), which the Assyrians called *A-ra-ar-ti* (Gen. viii. 4; 2 Kings xix. 37), south of Mount Caucasus; **Media**, south of the Caspian Sea (Dan. v. 28, 31); **Persia**, south of Media, in later Bible times a country of very great importance (Ezra i. 2; Esther i. 3), of which Shushan was the capital; **Assyria**, in the northern part of the Mesopotamian plain, the home of Israel's conquerors (2 Kings xvii. 1-6), of which Nineveh was the capital; **Elam**, southeast of Assyria, the home of one of the earliest nations (Gen. xiv. 1, 9); **Mesopotamia**, between the Tigris and the Euphrates, to the north, in which Haran, one of the homes of Abraham, was situated (Gen. xi. 31); **Chaldea**, between the same rivers, to the south, also called **Babylonia**, from its capital, and **Shinar** (Gen. xi. 2), the land of Judah's captivity (2 Chron. xxxvi. 11-20); **Arabia**, known also as *The East Country* (Gen. xxv. 6), including the peninsula of Sinai (Ex. xvi. 1); **Syria**, more commonly called **Aram** (Judges x. 6), extending from the Euphrates to Palestine, of which Damascus was the capital; **Phoenicia**, a narrow strip of land between Mount Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea, also called "the land of Tyre and Zidon," from its chief cities, whose king was a friend of David (1 Kings v. 1); **Canaan**, "the lowland," the country west of Jordan and the Dead Sea, which Israel inherited (Gen. xii. 5); **Egypt**, in the northeastern corner of Africa, the land of Israel's bondage (Ex. xiv. 30), of which Memphis was the ancient capital (Hos. ix. 6).

The New Testament, while its events are confined chiefly to the Holy Land, introduces the gospel into Asia Minor and Europe. There were fourteen provinces of Asia Minor, eleven of which are referred to in the New Testament, namely: **Pontus**, on the Black Sea, the birthplace of Aquila (Acts xviii. 2), and **Bithynia**, adjoining it (Acts xvi. 7; 1 Peter i. 1); **Cilicia** (Acts xxi. 39), **Pamphylia** (Acts xiii. 13) and **Lycia** (Acts xxvii. 5), on the Mediterranean; **Mysia** (Acts xvi. 7), **Lydia** and **Caria** (the three spoken of in general as "Asia" in Acts xvi. 6 and xix. 10) on the Ægean; and the five interior provinces—**Galatia** (Gal. i. 2); **Cappadocia** (Acts ii. 9), **Lycaonia** (Acts xiv. 6), **Pisidia** (Acts xiii. 14) and **Phrygia** (Acts xvi. 6). These should be located on the map. Passing to Europe, **Macedonia** (Acts xvi. 9, 10; xx. 1-3); **Greece**, also called **Achaia** (Acts xviii. 12; xx. 3), **Illyricum** (Rom. xv. 19) and **Italy** (Acts xxvii. 1) should be located.

3. **Islands.** A number of islands figure in the Bible narrative: **Cyprus**, in the northeast corner of the Mediterranean (Acts iv. 36), the home of Barnabas and Sergius Paulus (Acts xiii. 7); **Crete**, south of the Ægean Sea, between Asia Minor and Greece (Acts xxvii. 7); **Patmos**, in the Ægean Sea, not far from Ephesus (Rev. i. 9); **Sicily**, southwest of Italy (Acts xxviii. 12); **Melita**, now Malta, south of Sicily (Acts xxviii. 1).

4. **Seas and Rivers.** The following seas play such a large part in Bible history that they should be carefully located: The **Mediterranean**, "the great sea" (Josh. i. 4), which was the western boundary of the Old Testament world (Deut. xxxiv. 2) and the great highway of the missionary journeys of St. Paul (Acts xiii. 4; xxi. 1, 2; xxvii. 3); the **Red Sea**, between Egypt and the peninsula of Sinai, famous in the annals of Israel (Ex. xv. 4); the **Dead Sea**, called in the Bible "the sea of the plain" and "the salt sea" (Josh. iii. 16; Gen. xiv. 3), between Canaan and the Arabian desert; the **Sea of Galilee**, north of the Dead Sea (note its Old Testament name in Num. xxxiv. 11 and Josh. xiii. 27, and its New Testament names in Matt. xv. 29, John vi. 1 and Luke v. 1); the **Ægean Sea**, between Asia Minor and Greece (Acts xvi. 11, xviii. 18, xx. 13-15); the **Adriatic Sea**, between Greece and Italy (Acts xxvii. 27).

The location of the following rivers should likewise be made familiar: The **Tigris**, called in the Bible *Hiddekel*, flowing from Ararat to the Persian Gulf (Gen. ii. 14; Dan. x. 4); the **Euphrates**, west of the Tigris and finally uniting with it (Gen. ii. 14, 15; xv. 18; Josh. i. 4; xxiv. 2); the **Jordan**, flowing between the two parallel

ranges of the Lebanon Mountains into the Dead Sea (Josh. iii. 17; 2 Kings ii. 13; Matt. iii. 13); the Nile, in Africa, flowing northward into the Mediterranean (Gen. xli. 1; Ex. ii. 3).

5. **Mountains.** The mountains of the Bible all belong to one system—the **Lebanon Range**—extending from Ararat in a southwesterly direction toward the Red Sea. Mount Hermon, the mountains of Palestine, Mount Seir, on the south of the Dead Sea, and Mount Sinai all belong to this chain (Deut. iii. 25; Josh. xiii. 5; 1 Kings v. 6). Hermon, Lebanon, Kurn Hattin, Tabor, Gilead, Carmel, Ebal, Gerizim, Olivet and Nebo are easily located in passing from north to south. (See maps, pp. 159-161.)

QUESTIONS

1. What is the extent of the geography of the Bible?
2. What lands are included in the geography of the Old Testament?
3. What lands are included in the geography of the New Testament?
4. What islands figure in Bible history?
5. What seas?
6. What rivers?
7. What mountains?

LESSON XXXIII

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE BIBLE—CONTINUED

1. **The Holy Land and its Names.** The chief theater of the events of the Bible is that part of Syria which lies south of Lebanon along the Mediterranean coast. The country is known by several names. On the old Egyptian monuments it is called the land of **Ruthen**, or **Rutenna**. Its earliest Bible name is **Canaan**, "the low-land" (Gen. xii. 5). After the conquest of Joshua it is sometimes called **Israel**, though in later times that name was associated only with the northern portion. It is also called **Palestine**, the Greek and Latin word for "Philistine," the name of the heathen race that inhabited the lowlands by the sea coast, and were earliest known to remote nations (Isa. xiv. 29). "**The Holy Land**," though occurring but once in the Bible (Zech. ii. 12) is now the name in most frequent use, on account of the sacred associations with which the country is connected.

2. **Boundaries and Extent.** The land which God promised to Abraham was declared to extend from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates (Gen. xv. 18). It was afterwards explained to Joshua that the northern boundary should be beyond Lebanon, at "the entering in of Hamath" (Josh. xiii. 5). In Ezekiel's vision the eastern boundary is directed to be measured "from Hauran, and from Damascus, and from Gilead, and from the land of Israel by Jordan, from the border unto the east sea" (Ezek. xlvii. 18). It is clear that the territory which God assigned to the seed of Abraham was much larger than that which the Jews actually possessed, until, at least, the days of David and Solomon. The district generally understood as the Holy Land includes the region from Dan, at the foot of Mount Hermon, to Beersheba, at the foot of the Hebron hills, and from the Mediterranean to the Syrian desert. The region lies between latitude 31° and $33^{\circ} 30'$ north, and between 34° and 37° east longitude, about 150 miles in length by 50 in width, containing about 7500 square miles, about the size of the State of New Jersey.

3. **Topography.** The topography of the country is very interesting. During the early convolutions of the globe two high ranges of hills were thrown up on the north of Palestine, rising in some places

to the height of 10,000 feet and running parallel to each other—Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. These two ranges continue all through the land of Palestine, not as mountains, but as tablelands—Anti-Lebanon on the east of Jordan, broken into the highlands of Bashan, Gilead and Moab, and Lebanon on the west of Jordan broken into the highlands of Galilee, Samaria and Judea. Topographically, the land of Palestine lies in **five natural divisions**: (a) **The Maritime Plain**, extending along the Mediterranean Sea from eight to twenty miles wide; (b) the **Shephelah**, or Low Hills, from 300 to 500 feet high; (c) the **Central Ridge** of mountains from 2500 to 4000 feet high; (d) the **Jordan Valley**, a deep ravine, the bed of the river and its three lakes, from 500 to 1300 feet below the level of the sea, and from two to fourteen miles wide; (e) the **Eastern Tableland**, a region of rugged and precipitous mountains, beyond which a plain stretches away to the Arabian desert.

4. **The Jordan Valley.** Among the rivers of the world the Jordan is unique. "There may be something on the surface of another planet to match the Jordan Valley," says Dr. George Adam Smith, "there is nothing like it on this. No other part of our earth, uncovered by water, sinks to 300 feet below the level of the ocean. But here we have a rift more than one hundred and sixty miles long, and from two to fifteen broad, which falls from the sea level to as deep as 1292 feet below it, at the coast of the Dead Sea, while the bottom of the latter is 1300 feet deeper still." The Jordan rises in three sources in Mount Hermon, 1800 feet above sea level. On a direct line from Dan, one of its sources, it is one hundred and ten miles long, but, by its windings, over two hundred miles. The direct distance from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea is sixty miles, while in a boat one would travel three times as far. "The river itself, whose breadth is from twenty-five to sixty yards, commonly flows in a ravine within a ravine. The stream is enclosed in a narrow, rocky channel, which again is sunk in the Ghor, or valley of Jordan—a plain some miles in breadth, bounded by bare mountains on either side. . . . The waters of the Jordan, even in flood, do not spread beyond the inner channel; consequently, while the edge of the river is covered by a rich and rank vegetation ('the pride of Jordan'), the plain itself is commonly a dry, burned-up wilderness." Farther on, the river runs into a dreary, desolate waste (Matt. iii. 1).

5. **Three Natural Divisions.** Nature has divided Western Palestine into three natural sections—the southern, the central and the northern.

(1) **Judea** includes the land, roughly speaking, between the thirty-second parallel of latitude on the north and the Southern Desert. It is, for the most part, a high plateau, comprising scarcely two thousand square miles. It was in this district that the kingdom of Judah was located, and it is noted chiefly for its capital city, Jerusalem. The land is high, rocky, austere, secluded, giving rise to the name "the hill country of Judah" (literally, "Mount Judah," Josh. xxi. 11).

(2) **Samaria**, extending from the mountain passes of Judah to the plain of Esdraelon, includes the most open part of Palestine. It is the district where the tribe of Ephraim—the great rival of Judah—rose to power. It formed a chief part of the kingdom of the ten tribes, and, in the New Testament times, the region of Samaria.

(3) **Galilee** means "the ring," and is the name given to the northern frontier of Palestine. The province extended from Esdraelon to the foothills of Lebanon and from the Sea of Galilee to Phœnicia. It coincides with the inheritance of the tribes of Issachar, Zebulun, Asher and Naphtali. It is very irregular in contour, partly plain and partly mountain, the most picturesque and the most fertile of the regions of Palestine.

6. The Sea Coast. The sea coast line of this country is remarkable for its continuity. There are no natural creeks or bays adapted to form harbors. It was different with Phœnicia, where harbors are numerous. In consequence the Hebrews were not a seafaring people. The sea was to them an impassable barrier, a symbol of danger and insecurity. It is obvious, therefore, how well adapted the natural form of the Holy Land was for the purpose for which the people who inherited it were chosen. (See map, p. 161.)

QUESTIONS

1. What land is the chief theater of Bible events?
2. Give some of its names.
3. What are the boundaries of the Holy Land? Its size?
4. What is the general topography of the land? Its natural divisions?
5. Describe the Jordan Valley.
6. Into what divisions does Western Palestine fall?

LESSON XXXIV

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

Our last lesson was a study of the natural geography of the Holy Land. It is desirable that we should know something of the inhabitants and political divisions of the land at various epochs of its history. A number of successive waves of migration swept over the land, leaving their traces upon it, telling the story of a very ancient history.

1. **Early Days.** Prehistoric Palestine has not yet been restored. It is not within the province of the Bible to trace the racial history of Palestine. We have already learned something from the excavations which have been made there, and we shall doubtless learn more that we desire to know. Macalister's excavations at Gezer showed that in the neolithic age the city was inhabited by an aboriginal, non-Semitic race of small stature who lived in caves. They were probably akin to the Horites who dwelt in Mt. Seir. (Gen. xiv. 6). They used stone implements and cremated their dead. The excavations further show that the later inhabitants of Gezer were Semites, who came in as invaders of the land. They built a new city on the site of the old, buried their dead and used metal implements. The earliest references in the Bible to the primitive inhabitants include such names as the **Rephaim**, a giant aboriginal race; the **Zuzim**, the original inhabitants northeast of the Dead Sea; the **Emmim**, the Moabite name of a giant people east of the Dead Sea (Gen. xiv. 5); the **Zamzummim** (Deut. ii. 20), probably the same as the Zummim, and the **Horites**. A few individuals of these races are mentioned in later times (2 Sam. xvii. 4-7; xxi. 16-22). These races are, in all probability, sub-divisions of the early race which occupied the land, which, for want of a more definite name, we call **Canaanites**, though the Canaanites of the Bible were one of these divisions.

2. **Patriarchal Days.** In the Old Testament the mixed population which occupied the land before the period of the conquest is generally classified under six or seven tribal names. In three passages

(Deut. vii. 1; Josh. xxiv. 11 and iii. 10) seven nations are mentioned by name; in nine passages (Ex. iii. 8, 17, xxxiii. 2, xxxiv. 11; Deut. xx. 17; Josh. ix. 1, xi. 3, xii. 8; Judges iii. 5) six of the seven are given. These are the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, Perizzites and Jebusites.

(1) *The Canaanites*. "Canaanite" is both a geographical and an ethnic designation. Geographically it is never used of the land east of the Jordan, but is a name given to the people of the coast plain of south Palestine and of the Sidonian country north of Esdraelon. The Canaanites thus included the Philistines and the Phœnicians.

(2) *The Hittites*. This nation, which took its name from Heth, the second son of Canaan, is frequently mentioned in connection with the Amorites. They were concentrated principally in Syria, but colonists of them had settled in detachments in southern Palestine.

(3) *The Amorites*. "Amorite" is always a racial, never a local name. From the Bible statements it seems that the Amorites preceded the Hittites in the occupation of the mountain regions of Palestine and Syria. "The land of the Amorites" was one of the earliest names given to Palestine (Gen. xv. 16). In the period immediately preceding the conquest the Amorites had possession of the greater part of the mountain regions east and west of the Jordan Valley. Og and Sihon were called "the two kings of the Amorites."

(4) *The Hivites* occupied a limited district north of Jerusalem.

(5) *The Perizzites* dwelt in the plains of lower Galilee and in the foothills which bordered the Sharon plain.

(6) *The Jebusites* are mentioned only in connection with Jerusalem and its environs.

(7) Of the *Girgashites* nothing is known. Before the conquest the greater part of the Southland was held by the *Amalekites* (Num. xiii. 29). The *Moabites* were east of the Dead Sea (Deut. ii. 9); the *Ammonites*, between the Arnon and the Jabbok (Gen. xix. 38), and the *Bashanites*, or *Gileadites*, in the north (Deut. iii. 1-3).

3. The Days of the Conquest. The land as conquered by Joshua and allotted to the tribes was divided in the following order:

(1) **The Southern Group.** The first allotment was made to Judah and included the whole country south of Jerusalem from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea, embracing more than 2000 square miles. Out of this a part was afterwards taken for **Simeon** on the southwest (Josh. xix. 9), for **Dan** on the northwest (Judges xiii. 25), and for **Benjamin** on the north (Josh. xviii. 11, 12).

(2) **Central Group.** The land which lay immediately north of Benjamin was allotted to **Ephraim** and **Manasseh** (half tribe).

(3) **Northern Group.** The hills which form the northern boundary of Manasseh slope down toward the plain, the famous plain of Megiddo or Esdraelon. This section fell to the lot of **Issachar** (Josh. xix. 17). North of Issachar, **Zebulun**, **Asher** and **Naphtali** had their settlements (Josh. xix. 10, 24, 32), while still farther north, near the sources of the Jordan, was the town of Dan.

(4) **Eastern Group.** East of the Jordan were **Reuben** on the south (Deut. iii. 16), **Gad**, and the half tribe of **Manasseh** (Deut. iii. 13).

The tribe of **Levi** was not allotted a portion of the land. Being devoted to the offices connected with the priesthood it was supported by the tithes and offerings of the whole people. Cities for the residence of the Levites, however, were assigned them from the lots of the tribes (Josh. xx.). Chief among these were the six cities of refuge, three on the east (Bezer, Ramoth, Golan), and three on the west side of the Jordan (Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron).

4. **The Days of the Kings.** Under the kings of Israel and Judah the land was partitioned, the line of separation being on or near the old division line between Benjamin and Ephraim. At times this line shifted, so that Bethel, which at first belonged to the northern kingdom, was in later times found within the limits of the southern kingdom. Moab was tributary to Israel (2 Kings iii. 4), and Edom to Judah (1 Kings xii. 17; 2 Kings viii. 20).

5. **New Testament Days.** In New Testament times the country was divided into the three provinces of **Galilee**, **Samaria** and **Judea**, already described, on the west side of the Jordan, and **Bashan** and **Perea** on the east.

QUESTIONS

1. What do we know of the inhabitants of prehistoric Palestine?
2. Name the six tribes in possession of the land immediately preceding the conquest.
3. Who were—

(1) The Canaanites?	(4) The Hivites?
(2) The Hittites?	(5) The Perizzites?
(3) The Amorites?	(6) The Jebusites?

4. What was the home of the Amalekites? the Moabites? the Ammonites? the Gileadites?
5. How was the land divided among the Twelve Tribes?
6. How was the land divided in the days of the kings of Israel and Judah?
7. How was the land divided in New Testament times?

LESSON XXXV

INSTITUTIONS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

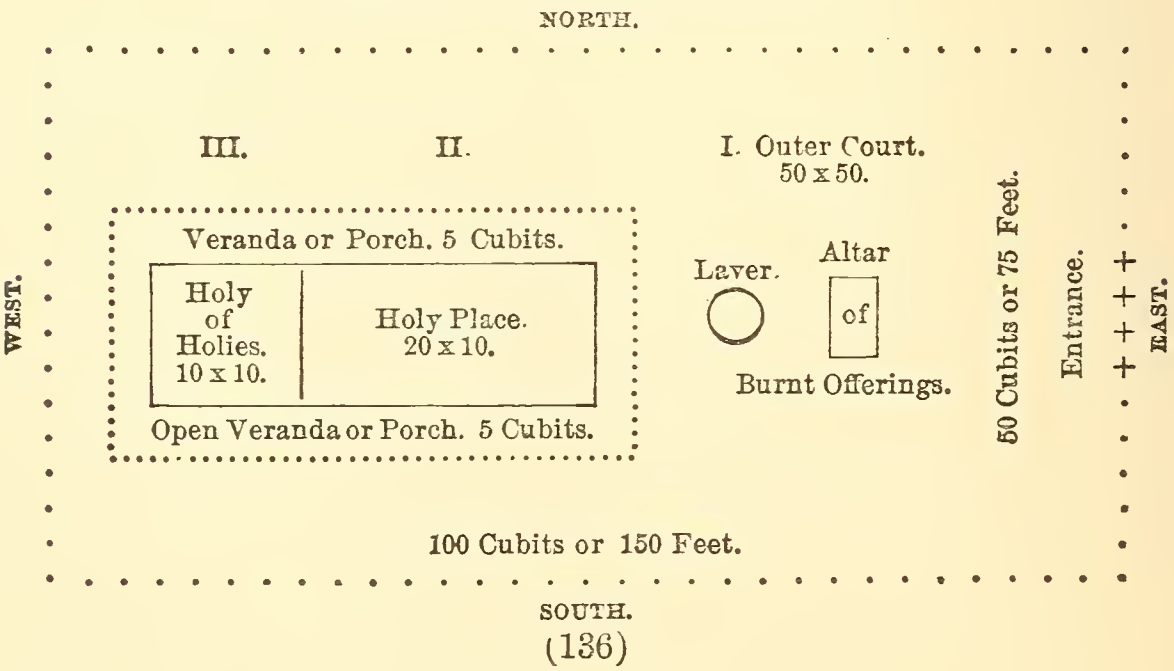
A knowledge of the fundamental religious institutions of Israel is necessary to an understanding of many things in the Bible. The worship of Israel centered in the altar and the priesthood—the place and the agent of sacrifice. Sacrifice was the most important transaction of primitive worship. The idea appears at the dawn of history (Gen. iv. 3). The first essential for such an offering was a place of sacrifice, which thus became a meeting-place between God and the worshiper.

I. PLACE

1. **The Altar.** The origin of the altar is buried in antiquity. The first reference in the Bible is to the altar of Noah (Gen. viii. 20), but it does not appear that he created the institution. Altars were erected by Abraham (Gen. xii. 7, 8; xiii. 4, 18; xxii. 9), by Isaac (Gen. xxvi. 25) and by Jacob (Gen. xxxiii. 20; xxxv. 7) prior to the establishment of the Mosaic economy. Naturally, the altar was the place of worship for an individual, or at most a tribe; but when Israel grew to be a nation of twelve tribes, an expansion of the altar was necessary. This was made by Moses under divine direction (Ex. xxv., xxvi.).

2. **The Tabernacle,** also called “the tent of testimony” (Num.

GROUND PLAN OF TABERNACLE.



ix. 15), was designed for the purpose of Israel's worship while wandering in the wilderness, so constructed that it could easily be transported, housing the Ark of the Covenant, which contained the written Law and was a sign of the Divine Presence. It consisted of three main parts, the Outer Court, the Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies—together with the necessary implements of worship (Ex. xxvii. to xxxviii.).

3. After Israel had become a settled people the **Temple** was built in the capital of the nation as an enlarged and permanent addition of the Tabernacle, which was then laid aside and treasured up in the Temple chambers. The first Temple was built by Solomon on Mount Moriah about 1000 B. C. This was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 587 B. C., but rebuilt under Zerubbabel and finished in 515 B. C. Having become dilapidated in the course of the centuries Herod the Great undertook to restore it with great magnificence, 20 B. C. It was fully completed in 65 A. D., only five years before its final destruction.

4. **The Synagogue** was the creation of the captivity and was not unlike our modern church. It was a place of meeting, as the etymology of the word suggests. "Wherever ten Jewish heads of families could be found a synagogue could be established. There were four hundred and sixty synagogues in Jerusalem; and every nationality of Jews had its own" (Acts vi. 9).

II. THE PRIESTHOOD

A fundamental institution of the worship of Israel was the priesthood. According to the law of Moses sacrifices could not be offered upon the altar except by the priests, nor in any other place than the court of God's sanctuary, the Tabernacle and afterwards the Temple (Deut. xii. 5-28). The priesthood was not an order or a caste, as with other nations, but a tribe—the tribe of Levi (Num. viii. 5-11). The first chief priest was the chief of that tribe, and is called, beyond any other name, Aaron the Levite. All the male descendants of Aaron were priests, the firstborn of the whole family, in continual succession, bearing the still higher dignity of High Priest (Ex. xxix. 1-35). In the decline of Israel this sacred institution was tampered with and corrupted by subjugating powers.

III. SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS

Sacrifice was the special means by which Israel was to realize its peculiar relation to Jehovah. The sacrifices prescribed in the ritual of Moses were of five kinds, four animal or bloody sacrifices and

one meal offering. The former expressed the idea of atonement, the latter of thanksgiving.

1. **The Burnt Offering.** In the Levitical system the burnt offering occupied the chief place. It consisted of the daily sacrifice, morning and evening, in the temple, of the spotless lamb. It was also called "the whole burnt offering" because all the flesh was consumed by fire on the altar. It expressed worship in the widest sense, praise for past mercies and the consecration of the worshiper to God (Lev. i. 2-9). Its essential feature was the consumption of the victim by fire upon the altar. The individual burnt offering was an animal or bird, according to the ability of the offerer.

2. **The Sin Offering** was altogether expiatory, and was to be presented in case of transgression. It was in a sense voluntary and expressed the offerer's knowledge of and faith in the means of reconciliation. It was not limited to an individual, but a whole congregation could offer a sin offering. The animal was slain and burned without the camp and its blood sprinkled by the priest on the altar of incense in the Holy Place (Lev. iv. 3-7).

3. **The Trespass Offering** (R. V., "guilt offering") resembled the sin offering, being also altogether expiatory and for particular offences. When these offences were committed the offering could not be withheld without penalty. Trespass offerings were never offered for the whole congregation. The victim was commonly a ram, which was slain and burned on the altar (Lev. v. 1-10).

4. **The Peace Offering** was presented, as we learn from Lev. vii. 11-20, either in thankfulness for some special mercy received, or in the way of supplication for some special mercy desired. The victim could be any animal used for sacrifice. The offering was divided into three parts: the fat was burned on the altar, the breast and right shoulder were eaten by the priest, the remainder was eaten by the worshiper and his friends.

5. **The Meat Offering** (R. V., "meal offering") was commonly added to the Peace Offering (Lev. vii. 12, 13) and consisted of vegetable food which was shared between the priest and the offerer. A meat offering and a drink offering usually accompanied the bloody sacrifices (Num. xv. 1-12).

In addition to these prescribed sacrifices there were offerings of Firstfruits, Firstborn, Tithes, Vow-gifts, etc.

IV. SACRED TIMES AND FEASTS

The Hebrews observed a number of sacred times and feasts.

There was the **daily morning and evening sacrifice** (Ex. xxix. 38-42). There was the weekly **Sabbath**, or day of rest (Ex. xx. 8-11). There was the monthly **New Moon** (Num. x. 10), observed as a Sabbath. There was the **Sabbatical Year** (Lev. xxv. 2-7), observed as a year of rest for the ground as well as for man and beast. There was the **Year of Jubilee** (Lev. xxv. 9, 10), or Sabbath of Sabbatical years, when slaves were set free, debts forgiven and forfeited inheritances recovered. And there were the **Seven Annual Solemnities**:

1. **The Feast of the Passover** (Ex. xii. 1-28), in the spring, on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, commemorating the deliverance from Egyptian bondage, observed with the eating of unleavened bread and a slain lamb.

2. **The Feast of Pentecost** (Lev. xxiii. 15-21), in the early summer, on the fiftieth day after the Passover, commemorating the giving of the law (Ex. xix. 1-11), observed with the laying of the first-fruits on the altar.

3. **The Feast of Tabernacles** (Lev. xxiii. 34-44), in the fall, commemorating the outdoor life of the wilderness, observed by living in huts or booths.

4. **The Day of Atonement** (Ex. xxx. 10), in the fall, five days before the Feast of Tabernacles, when the high priest entered into the Holy of Holies.

5. **The Feast of Trumpets** (Lev. xxiii. 24), the first day of the seventh month, "New Year Day," observed with the blowing of trumpets.

6. **The Feast of Dedication** (John x. 22), commemorating the rededication of the temple under Judas Maccabeus, 166 B. C., after its defilement by the Syrians.

7. **The Feast of Purim** (Esther ix. 17-32), commemorating Queen Esther's deliverance of the Jewish people.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the significance of the altar?
2. What was the origin of the Tabernacle?
3. What was the origin of the Temple?
4. How many temples did the Hebrews have?
5. What was the origin of the Synagogue?
6. Who were the priests?
7. What were the chief offerings prescribed by the law of Moses?
8. What were the sacred times observed?
9. Which were the three great feasts of Israel?
10. How was the Day of Atonement observed?

LESSON XXXVI

INSTITUTIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The institutions of the New Testament were few and simple. He who blotted out the handwriting of ordinances and established the new covenant left His followers large liberty in organizing themselves as a Christian community. The chief institutions to be noted here are the Church, Church Officers, Sacred Rites and Sacred Days.

I. THE CHURCH

The first New Testament institution is **the Church**. Jesus Christ Himself founded the Church on the confession of the Apostles (Matt. xvi. 18). Just before His ascension He gave them His great commission (Matt. xxviii. 18-20). He is the Head, and the Church is His body (Col. i. 18). Jesus Christ did not Himself organize His Church, or leave a formula of government. He did not give explicit directions during the forty days between His resurrection and ascension, as the Church of Rome claims. That task He left to His apostles; and so far as the Church took form under their guidance it is of divine authority for all time; *e.g.*, in the fixing of the Christian Sabbath. The characteristic of the Apostolic Church was the richness and fullness of its spiritual gifts. The Church started as a society at Jerusalem which worshiped where it could. The name "church" is now given also to the building in which Christians worship, but it was not so used in the New Testament. Neither the government of the Church nor its place of worship was a matter of divine inspiration. The building which was finally adopted as affording the best model was not a temple, Jewish or heathen, but the Roman basilica or town hall.

II. CHURCH OFFICERS

There was a twofold class of offices in the Apostolic Church, one *general*, the other *local*. They are enumerated in Eph. iv. 11; **apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers**, and in Phil. i. 1; *bishops* (literally "overseers," the same as "elders," elsewhere called "presbyters," (cf. Acts xx. 17 with 28), and **deacons**.

1. The general church officers, or those having no fixed residence and belonging to the whole Church in their ministry, are:

(1) **Apostles.** The apostles were called directly by Christ and were His personal representatives (Matt. x. 1-4). This name was given them by Christ Himself. They received special instruction from Him in private, were given authority to cast out devils and heal the sick (Matt. x. 8), and after Pentecost to communicate the Holy Spirit to believers (Acts viii. 18, xix. 6). But their chief qualification was that they were witnesses of the risen Christ (Acts i. 22, ii. 24, 32, iii. 15, 26, iv. 10, v. 30-32, x. 40, 41, xiii. 30-33, xvii. 3, 18, 31, xxii. 15, xxv. 8, 23, 1 Cor. ix. 1, xv. 3-8). The names of the original twelve are: Peter and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew (probably Nathaniel); Thomas and Matthew; James the son of Alphæus, and Thaddæus (Lebbæus or Jude); Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot. The place of Judas was filled by the Church's election of Matthias (Acts i. 15 ff.), and Paul was specially called.

(2) **Prophets.** The prophet formed a great link between the Old Testament and the New. The Forerunner of the Gospel was a prophet; the birth of Christ took place in an atmosphere of prophecy; and Jesus Himself was regarded by the people as a prophet. It is not strange, therefore, that the office of prophecy should continue for a time in the Christian Church. The whole Church (Acts ii. 46) was at first endowed with prophetic gifts; but afterwards the name came to be applied to a class of exhorters who visited the churches and usually associated with the apostles (Eph. ii. 20, iii. 5, iv. 11; Acts xi. 28, xxi. 10).

(3) **Evangelists.** Besides bearing witness to the resurrection in particular the apostles had the general duty of evangelizing those who had not yet heard the Word (Acts v. 42). This work was later shared by others—Philip, Paul, Barnabas—and those who thus excelled in missionary work were called evangelists.

2. The local church officers were **pastors** (shepherds) and **teachers**, who had care of the individual congregations. Another designation for the local overseers of the congregation was **presbyter-bishop** ("presbyter" comes from the Jewish synagogue; "bishop" (*ἐπίσκοπος*) is a Gentile word and means "overseer," "burgess of the city"). Then **deacons** were appointed when the work of the elders (presbyter-bishop) became too heavy, who were to minister to the sick and the poor, and sometimes perform the higher offices of the ministry. Then when the need of a female

order of helpers was felt we read of a **deaconess** (Rom. xvi. 1), which in time became a regular order.

III. RITES

Two sacred rites (we call them Sacraments, see the new Book III) were practiced in the Christian Church from the beginning, viz.: **Baptism** and **the Lord's Supper**. Both were instituted by our Lord (Matt. xxviii. 19; xxvi. 26-28). *Baptism* was the sacrament of initiation into the Christian body (Acts ii. 41); *the Lord's Supper* was the sacrament of brotherhood and was celebrated when Christians assembled for worship, at first daily, later only on the Lord's Day. The elements of bread and wine were consecrated to their sacramental use by a prayer of thanksgiving (1 Cor. xi. 24) together with a recital of the words of institution. *Confession of sin* was recommended (Jas. v. 16) and *the charism of healing* the sick was performed by prayer and anointing with oil (Jas. v. 14).

IV. SACRED DAYS

At first the disciples, following the example of their Lord, observed the Sabbath (Mark iii. 1), but after the resurrection, because Jesus arose on this day (Matt. xxviii. 1-7) and on this day frequently appeared to His disciples (Matt. xxviii. 10; Mark xvi. 9-14; Luke xxiv. 13-49; John xx. 19-29) and because on this day the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Church (Acts ii.), the apostles adopted the first day of the week as **the Christian Sabbath**. Jewish Christians, like Paul, kept **Pentecost**; but there is no trace of the observance of other festivals in the New Testament.

QUESTIONS

1. Why are there few institutions in the New Testament?
2. Name the chief institutions.
3. Is any form of church government of divine inspiration?
4. In what sense has the Apostolic Church divine authority?
5. What twofold class of church officers was there in the New Testament Church?
6. What were the Apostles?
7. What were the Prophets?
8. What were the Evangelists?
9. What officers had the local churches?
10. What were the elders, the bishops, the deacons?
11. What female order is referred to in the New Testament?
12. What religious rites were practiced by the New Testament Church?
13. What sacred days were observed?

LESSON XXXVII

LANGUAGE AND EXTERNAL FORM

1. It is, of course, well known that **the original Bible was not written in English**. All Bible readers are familiar with the fact that the books, or rolls, of the Old Testament Scriptures were written in Hebrew,* and the books, or rolls, of the New Testament in Greek. At once we eagerly ask, Are any of these original manuscripts in existence? But we are doomed to disappointment. All of the original documents have been lost.

2. Until the invention of printing in the fifteenth century the only mode of transmitting ancient books was by the slow and laborious process of **copying one manuscript from another**. Just in what form the Old Testament Scriptures were committed to writing we do not know. In the time of Moses, Eastern peoples engraved their literature on stones or on clay tablets, which were baked. Many of these are preserved intact for us to-day. But we have no evidence that any of the Old Testament was thus written, unless there is significance in the form in which the Decalogue was preserved (Ex. xxxiv. 1). There is evidence that the Old Testament writers used some perishable material, such as papyrus (Jer. xxxvi. 2, 23; Ezek. iii. 2). "As prepared by the Egyptians," Dr. Price tells us, "the book of the papyrus reed became an elegant light paper, but with dampness and moisture it soon perished." After papyrus came vellum, made of the skins of animals, usually the antelope, and the earliest manuscripts of Scripture which we possess are of this kind. Long rolls of vellum were made for the several books, the reader unwinding one roller with one hand while winding up the other with the other hand as he read along. This seems to have been the form of books in the time of Christ. But all the oldest manuscripts which have been preserved are in the form of leaves, showing a later date.

3. Books perish in the using, and **the early documents of Scripture perished**. Fire, water, wars and persecutions, to say nothing

*The following three sections were written in Aramaic, viz.: Jer. x. 11; Dan. ii. 4 to vii. 28; Ezra iv. 8 to vi. 18.

of the corroding finger of time in quiet days, or the custom of the Jews reverently to bury their precious parchments when these became frail through use, will account for the disappearance of these precious treasures. By the time the New Testament was written the original documents of the Old had all disappeared, while the original documents of the New Testament have long since perished.

That sounds alarming, but we must remember that, so far as is known, we do not have the original manuscript of any ancient classic. For the preservation of the priceless treasures of ancient Greek and Roman literature the world is dependent upon copies made many centuries after the originals were written.*

4. So it will be seen that we are by no means on uncertain ground when we say that we have the original Scriptures. **There are many more manuscripts of the Bible than of any other book in the world.** It is quite impossible to say exactly how many there are altogether, for they are widely scattered. Some are in the great public libraries, others are in private possession. Dr. Gasper's library alone is said to contain some eight hundred manuscripts of the Old Testament, while a very high authority (Scrivener's "Introduction," 1894) says there are about four thousand New Testament manuscripts. All the manuscripts known may be conveniently catalogued in these three classes:

(1) **Hebrew Manuscripts of the Old Testament.** The oldest regarded as authentic is now in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg. It bears the date of 916 A. D., but it contains only the Prophets. The oldest manuscript containing the entire Old Testament is the "Codex Laudianus," Bodleian Library, Oxford, and dates from 1010 A. D.

(2) **Greek Manuscripts of the New Testament.** Of these, three are invested with peculiar interest:

(a) The **Vatican** manuscript, said to be the *oldest of all existing documents*. It is in the Vatican Library at Rome, where it has been for the last five hundred years. It consists of about seven hundred leaves of the finest vellum, and is beautifully written. It lacks Gen.

* "Few manuscripts of the Greek or Roman classics are older than the ninth or tenth century. The Medicean manuscript of Virgil is of the fourth century; the Vatican manuscript of Dion Cassius is of the fifth; the oldest manuscripts of Æschylus and Sophocles date from the tenth, those of Euripides from the twelfth, those of the 'Annals of Tacitus' from the eleventh. The oldest copy of Homer is from the thirteenth, though the Harris fragments in the British Museum are of a far earlier date. Of the 'Meditations' of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius only one complete copy is known to exist, and it has no title."—*Schaff*.

i. to xlvi., Ps. cv. to cxxxvii., and all after Heb. ix. Since the time of Pope Pius IX. it has been accessible to scholars in an excellent facsimile.

(b) The **Sinaitic**, which takes its name from the fact that it was rescued from the monks in the Convent of St. Catharine, at the foot of Mount Sinai, by Dr. Tischendorf. "In visiting the library of the convent in the month of May, 1844, he perceived in the middle of the great hall a basketful of old parchments, and the librarian told him that two heaps of similar old documents had already been used for the fires. What was his surprise to find in the basket a number of sheets of a copy of a Septuagint (Greek) Old Testament, the most ancient looking manuscript he had ever seen! The authorities of the convent allowed him to take away about forty sheets."—*Smyth*. Finally, in 1859, through the influence of the Tsar of Russia, Dr. Tischendorf got possession of the manuscript as we now have it, written most beautifully and carefully on the skins of a hundred antelopes. While there are many omissions in the Old Testament, the New Testament is perfect; not a leaf is gone. It is now in the possession of the head of the Greek Church at St. Petersburg.

(c) The **Alexandrian** manuscript is in the British Museum, London, the treasure of Protestant Christianity. This manuscript lacks ten leaves of the Old Testament and several of the New Testament. It bears the inscription in Arabic on the first sheet "by the hand of Thekla the Martyr." It was presented to Charles I. in 1628—seventeen years too late to be of service in preparing the Authorized Version—by Cyril Lucar, a Greek patriarch of Alexandria; hence its name. This is the third oldest document in the possession of the Church.

(3) **Early Translations, or Versions.** A version of the Bible is a translation into some other than the original language.

The earliest version of the Bible committed to writing was the **Septuagint**, which was made, or at least begun, sometime in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, 285-247 B. C. The tradition is that it was the work of seventy scholars of Alexandria; hence its name, *Septuagint* being a Latin word meaning "seventy." Though the translation is faulty in many respects, it has had a large influence on our modern Bible. It is from it that we have our present titles of the books of the Old Testament, while the order in which the books are arranged, quite different from that of the original Hebrew Scriptures, established the order in our English Bible. The

earliest copies of the Septuagint in our possession are those in connection with the Greek New Testament manuscripts referred to in the preceding paragraph.

The next version in point of time is the *Syriac*, which is assigned to the second century, A. D.—a version representing very nearly the language of the people among whom our Lord moved. To the same century the beginning of the *Latin Version* is assigned, and to that or the following century belongs the *Egyptian* version. We have also *Ethiopic* and *Armenian* versions from those early centuries. These are the earliest versions of the Bible, and they are succeeded by numberless others up to the present time. The best known is the revision of the Latin version by Jerome, called the **Vulgate**, at the close of the fourth century, the significance of the name being that it was in the language of the common people. “No other work,” says Smyth, “has ever had such an influence on the history of the Bible. For more than a thousand years it was the parent of every version of the Scriptures in western Europe. It is the version of the Catholic Church to this day.”

The remarkable thing about our English Bible is that so few errors are in it. When it is remembered that the entire Scriptures in their original language were multiplied by the tedious process of copying by hand—sometimes a hundred scribes writing from one dictation—and that the Hebrew language as originally written was all in consonants without any divisions between the words,* and that in both Hebrew and Greek there are pairs of letters which so resemble each other that a careless stroke might lead to confusion, it is truly a matter for gratitude that our heavenly Father has so carefully guarded the Book He has given His children.

QUESTIONS

1. In what languages were the original Scriptures written?
2. Do we possess any of the original manuscripts of the Bible? Why not?
3. What was the form of books in the time of Christ?
4. In what form are the earliest manuscripts we possess?
5. Are there many manuscripts of the Bible?

* Collett thus illustrates this: it is as if we should write the Lord's Prayer—
RFTHRWHCHRTNHVNHLLWDBTHNM, etc.

6. What three classes of these manuscripts are there?
7. What is the oldest manuscript of the Old Testament?
8. What is the oldest manuscript of the New Testament?
9. What is the oldest version of the Bible? The most widely known?
10. What is the miracle of our English Bible?

LESSON XXXVIII

OUR ENGLISH BIBLE

1. The Latin *Vulgate* was **England's first Bible**. It was taken to England by the early Christian missionaries who came from Rome. It was from this version that the English Psalter of the Prayer Book was made. The Vulgate continued in use in England until Wycliffe's Bible, 1382 A. D. There were, however, several previous attempts to give the people the substance of the Scriptures in their own (Anglo-Saxon) tongue. The first to attempt it was **Caedman**, who was an untutored cowherd of Northumbria. One winter night, so the story goes, about the year 700 A. D., as he lay asleep in the stable of the famous Abbey of Whitby, a voice came to him and bade him sing. He had left the feasts of his people because he could make no song when the harp was passed to him, and he replied, "I cannot sing; for this cause I came in hither." "Yet," said He who stood before him, "shalt thou sing to me." He sang of creation and of the Saviour of men. His song—a sort of paraphrase of Scripture—is in blank verse, and some of it remains to the present day.

2. About the same time, in South England, a bard by the name of Eadhelm, or Aldhelm, later a bishop, was similarly at work. He knew that the people did not care for sermons, so, attired as a minstrel, he took his stand where people passed by and sang them the messages of the Bible. He was the first to translate the Psalms into English. Eadhelm died in the year 709 A. D. A more famous name in the work of bringing the Bible to the people in their own tongue is that of the venerable scholar **Bede** (674-735 A. D.). Bede was a monk who gave himself to the arduous task of translating the Scriptures—the first pure translator—but none of his work escaped the ravages of time.

3. The next translator was **Alfred the Great** (849-901 A. D.), who not only incorporated the Ten Commandments into the laws of England, but translated, or had translated, other portions of Scripture. In Alfred's Bible the Lord's Prayer reads thus: "Uren Fader dhic in heofnas, sie gehalged dhin noma," etc.

Nothing more of importance was done in the way of Bible translation for some hundreds of years. There was little leisure

for scholarship during the invasion of the British Isles then going on. In 1066 A. D. came the Norman conquest, and Anglo-Saxon gave place to English. Not until the thirteenth century do we find anything more of interest concerning the Bible. In 1250 A. D. the Bible was first divided into chapters by Cardinal Hugo, the division of the chapters into verses not being made until three centuries later.

4. **The first translation of the Bible into English** was made by John Wycliffe, "the morning-star of the Reformation" (1320-1384 A. D.), who combined a professorship in Oxford University with a humble country parish, that he might keep in touch with the needs of the people. His Bible appeared in 1382. The Lord's Prayer in Wycliffe's Bible reads thus: "Oure fadir that art in heuenes, halwid be thi name, thi kingdom comme to, be thi wille done as in heuen so in erthe; gif to us this day oure breed ouer other substance; and forgeue to us our dettis as we forgeue to oure dettours, and leede us not in to temptacioun but delyuere us fro yuel" (Matt. vi. 9-13). Wycliffe's Bible was divided into chapters according to Cardinal Hugo's arrangement, but not into verses, which came a hundred and fifty years later. Bibles were still copied by hand in Wycliffe's day, and it took nearly a year to make a copy, which cost about \$200.00. "There was no open vision in those days." People who were too poor to own a copy of the Scriptures used to pay large sums to be permitted to read it an hour a day, and it is said that a load of hay was sometimes given for a few pages. The reading of this English Bible was afterwards forbidden under penalty of death. Forty years after Wycliffe's death the Roman Catholic authorities dug up his bones and burned them, scattering the ashes on the River Swift.

5. After Wycliffe there was **an interval of a hundred years** before the next great version of the Bible appeared. Meanwhile many things had happened which affected the history of the Bible. "About twenty years after the death of Wycliffe there was living in the old German town of Mainz a boy bearing the not very attractive name of Johann Gensfleisch, which means, put into plain English, John Gooseflesh. One morning, so runs the story, he had been cutting the letters of his name out of the bark of a tree, and having been left alone in the house soon after, amused himself by spreading out the letters on a board so as to form again the words,

Johann Gensfleisch.

A pot of purple dye was beside the fire, and by some awkward turn one of his letters dropped into it. Quickly, without stopping to think, he snatched it out of the boiling liquid, and as quickly let it drop again, this time on a white dressed skin which lay on a pot nearby, the result being a beautiful purple 'h'—the first printed letter."—*Smyth*. Whatever truth there may be in the legend, it is certain that Gutenberg's printing press was working in 1450, and the first complete book that was issued from it was a copy of the Latin Bible, known as the Mazarin Bible, from the fact that a copy of it was found about a century ago in Cardinal Mazarin's library, Paris.

6. With the **advent of the printing press** the Bible took wings. Before the end of the fifteenth century there were issued in Europe about eighty editions of the Latin Bible. And, what is very much more significant, there were versions circulating in the following languages: German, Italian, French, Danish, Russian, Slavonic, Bohemian and Spanish. In 1516, Erasmus, a noted scholar of Holland, published a Greek Testament from the ancient manuscripts. In September, 1522, the first installment of Luther's German Bible appeared (called the *Septemberbibel*). It was a translation of the New Testament from the Greek of Erasmus. Five thousand copies of it were printed and sold before the December of that same year. One printer in Wittenberg printed 100,000 copies on his press. A printer in Basel published seven editions between 1522 and 1525; another, of the same city, five editions between 1523 and 1525. The precious little volume, which contains the message of salvation, made its way with lightning rapidity into the palaces of princes, the castles of knights, the convents of monks, the houses of burghers and the huts of peasants. In those days the word of God "had free course, and was glorified."

7. **Luther's translation** of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew followed and was completed by 1534. And so, "in a relatively short time the most epoch-making work of modern times came to light." This was not the first German Bible, but it was the most popular, and it has proved the most influential book ever published in the German language, leading to the predominance of one dialect throughout the land. "In giving the Germans their Bible Luther gave the German language a permanent literary form, and, upon a basis of a common language replacing the confusion of dialects that had before been current, unified the German people."—*Jacobs*.

QUESTIONS

1. What was England's first Bible?
2. What early attempts were made to give the English people the Scriptures in their own tongue?
3. What did Bede accomplish?
4. What did Alfred the Great accomplish?
5. What did Wycliffe accomplish?
6. Who invented printing?
7. What effect had printing on the Bible?
8. What importance attaches to Luther's German Bible?

LESSON XXXIX

OUR ENGLISH BIBLE.—CONTINUED

1. In 1470 **William Caxton** introduced the printing press into England, but the first book printed on it was not an English, but a Hebrew Bible. The first printed English Bible was that of Tyndale. William Tyndale was born in 1484. He was a student in the University of Cambridge when Erasmus came there to lecture, and Tyndale soon mastered his Greek Testament. He could not keep his treasure to himself. His mind took fire with the purpose of disseminating a knowledge of the Scriptures. One day at the table of a gentleman of whose son he was tutor, in discussion with an ignorant churchman, he made the startling announcement, "If God spare me I will one day make the boy that drives the plow in England to know more of Scripture than the Pope does."

2. The story of the publication of **Tyndale's English Testament** is one of the tragedies in the history of the Bible. He was persecuted by the Church authorities at home and abroad. Denied any help in England, in 1524 he went to the continent, thinking that in the free city of Hamburg he could pursue his purpose without molestation. Here, in poverty and distress, and amid constant danger of betrayal, the brave exile worked on; and so successful was he that in 1525 he carried his completed translation to Cologne for publication. The work was discovered through the cunning of a priest, and Tyndale made his way with the sheets of his Testament to Worms, already made sacred by Luther's trial. Here the work was printed, and through the aid of English merchants copies were smuggled into England, where they were eagerly bought and read. Every effort was made by the Catholics, however, to prevent this Testament from getting into the hands of the people. Thousands of copies were seized and destroyed. Tyndale never dared return to his native land. In 1536 he was seized at Antwerp by officers of Charles V., summarily tried and sentenced to death. At the stake his last words were, "Lord, open the king of England's eyes." He was then strangled and burned. His prayer was nearer its answer than he dreamed. Within a year the English Bibles of Coverdale

and Matthews were recognized and authorized by the same king of England, Henry VIII.

3. Tyndale had not lived to complete the translation of the Old Testament, but now, under royal sanction, the people of England were given the Scriptures in their spoken tongue. This edition contained the apocryphal books, omitted from our modern Bibles. It is **Coverdale's version** of the Psalms, translated from Jerome's revision of the Vulgate, which is found in the Psalter of the Church of England Prayer Book.

4. In 1539 appeared the "**Great Bible**," so called from its size, the work of Coverdale and others under the authority of the king, for use in the churches. Because it was chained to the reading desk for safe keeping it was also known as the "Chained Bible." This was the first Authorized Version of the Bible.

5. During the brief reign of **Edward VI.** the Bible was printed and read at liberty, but with the accession of Bloody Mary, a violent and cruel Romanist, the printing, importation and circulation of the Bible were all prohibited. About this time (1551) the New Testament was first divided into verses. Riding from Geneva to Paris on horseback Sir Robert Stevens divided the chapters of his Greek Testament into substantially the same verses that we have in our English Bible. One edition of the New Testament appeared in Mary's reign, in spite of her persecution—the first to be divided into verses.

6. In 1560 a very important edition of the Bible appeared, the "**Geneva Bible**," so called because it had been prepared by the reformers who had fled to Geneva during the persecutions under Mary—a very valuable English version because translated from the original Hebrew and Greek. This was the first Bible in which italics were used to indicate words which are not in the original. It was also the first whole Bible to be divided into verses.

7. A great change, however, had taken place in England, under Queen Elizabeth, who inaugurated her long and prosperous reign by pressing to her lips and heart a copy of the Bible. In 1568, under her patronage, the "**Bishops' Bible**"—the work of her bishops—appeared, but as it was a very expensive book, costing about \$80.00 of our money, and was not a very good translation, it never attained any considerable popularity. In 1582 the New Testament was issued in English by the Roman Catholics at their English Seminary at Rheims. In 1610 their translation of the Old Testament was finished at Douay, whither the Seminary had been re-

moved, and their completed Bible, known as the "Douay Bible," was published.

8. There were now so many versions of the English Bible as to be confusing. Besides, many words had undergone a change of meaning since these Bibles had been printed. Accordingly, under the patronage of **King James I.**, fifty-four translators, including High Churchmen, Puritans, and the best scholars in the land, undertook the task, sitting in sections at Westminster, Oxford and Cambridge—six in all, two at each place. In 1611, after about five years of continuous work, the **Authorized Version** appeared. It would seem, indeed, as if Providence had directed the work, for so well done was it that the King James version is only now being superseded in our churches.

9. The discovery of certain valuable ancient manuscripts, like the Codex Sinaiticus in 1844, stirred up scholars to improve our English version of King James. In consequence, in 1870, under the leadership of the Church of England, a convocation of nearly one hundred men of different denominations—the best scholars to be found in England and America—was called at Westminster Abbey. For over ten years they labored at their work, until, in 1881, the revised New Testament was published. In 1885 the whole **Revised Version** of the Bible was published. In 1901 the Americans published the **American Revision**, containing their preferences in disputed readings where their English colleagues had overruled them. The American Revision is considered the best translation of the Scriptures ever made.

QUESTIONS

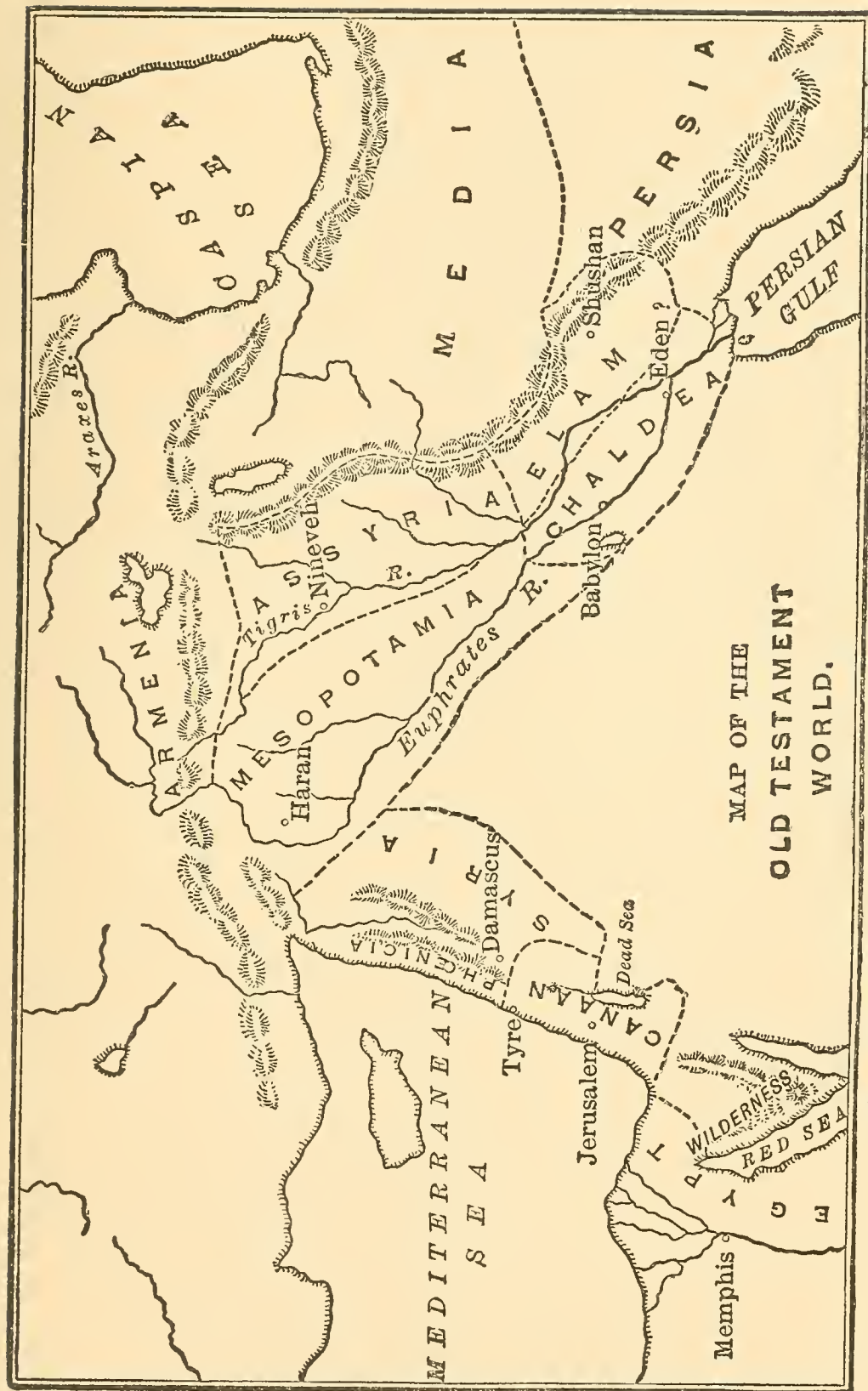
1. What was the first printed English Bible?
2. Tell the story of Tyndale's work on the Bible.
3. For what is the "Great Bible" noted?
4. How did the Bible fare under Bloody Mary?
5. When was the Bible divided into verses?
6. For what is the "Geneva Bible" noted?
7. What was Queen Elizabeth's attitude to the Bible?
8. What is the history of the Authorized Version?
9. What is the history of the Revised Version?

APPENDIX I.

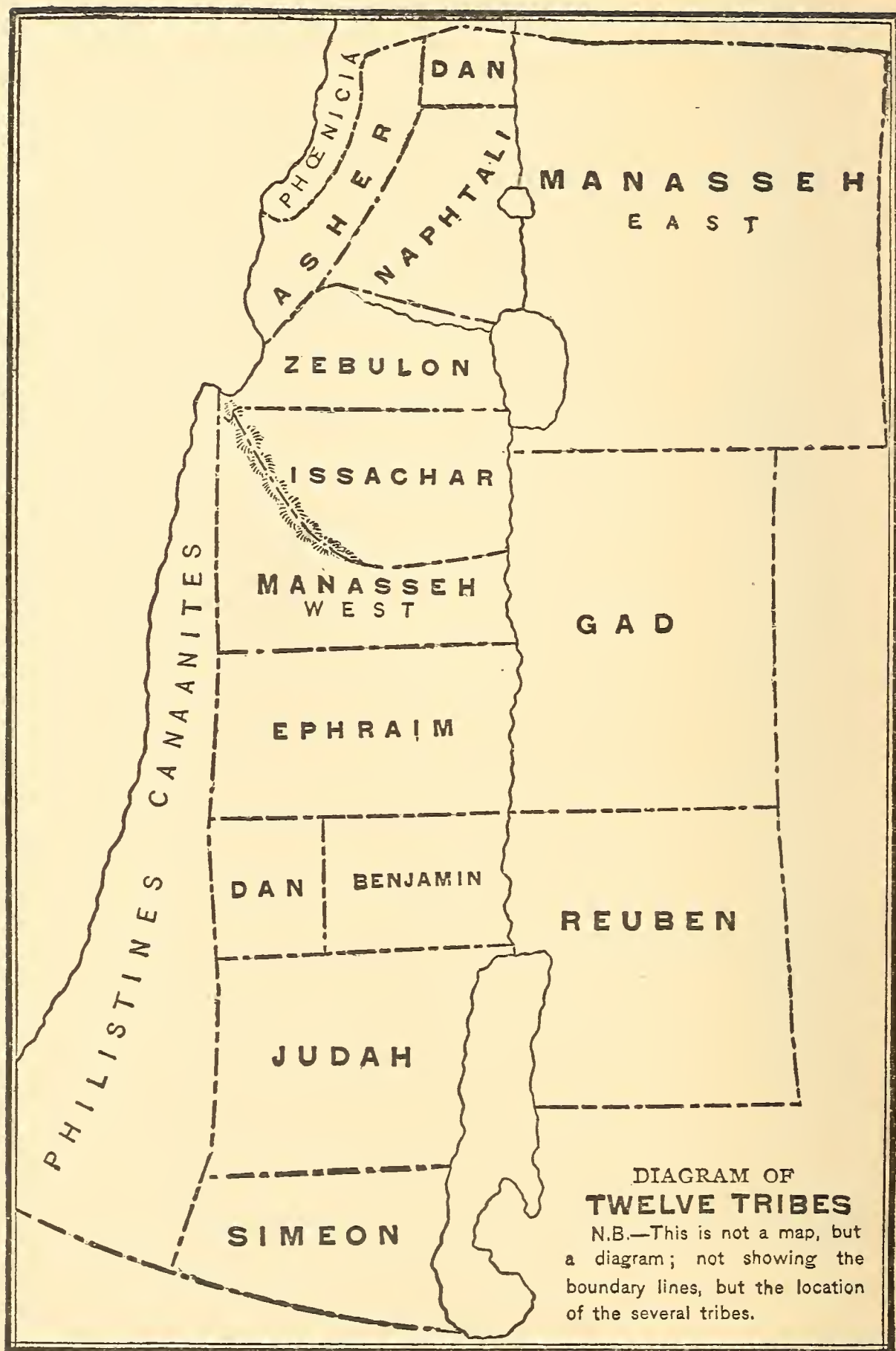
LEADING FEATURE OF PERIODS.	DYNASTIES.	KINGS.	LENGTH OF REIGNS.	PROPHETS.	KINGS OF JUDAH.
I. Idolatry taking root,—about 50 years,	1. 2. 3.	1 JEROBOAM I. 2 Nadab. 3 Baasha. 4 Elah. 5 Zimri. 6 Omri. 7 AHAB. 8 Ahaziah. 9 Jehoram.	22 years. 2 24 2 7 days. 12 years. 22 2 12	Ahijah. Jehu. Elijah—Micaiah. Elisha.	Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa. Asa. Asa. Asa. Asa. Asa. Asa and Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat, Jeho- ram, Ahaziah. Joash. Joash. Joash and Amaziah. Amaziah. Uzziah. Uzziah. Uzziah. Uzziah. Uzziah, Jotham, and Ahaz. Ahaz and Hezekiah.
II. Idolatry rampant, —about 48 years, }	4.				
III. Idolatry slightly checked,—about 102 years,	5.	10 JEHU. 11 Jehoahaz. 12 Joash. 13 Jeroboam II. 14 Zachariah. 15 Shallum. 16 Menahem. 17 Pekahiah. 18 PEKAH. 19 Hosea.	28 17 16 41 6 months. 1 month. 10 years. 2 20 9	Jonah. Hosea and Amos.	
IV. Idolatry termin- ating in ruin, in- cluding irregu- lars,—from 40 to 70 years,	6. 7. 8. 9.			Oded.	

APPENDIX II.

PERIODS.	KINGS.	LENGTH OF REIGNS.	PROPHETS.	KINGS OF ISRAEL.
I. First Religious Decline and First Religious Revival,—about 86 years.	1 Rehoboam. 2 Abijam (or Abijah). 3 Asa. 4 JEHOHAPHAT. 5 Jehoram. 6 Ahaziah. (Athaliah.)	17 years. 3 " 41 " 25 " 8 " 1 " 6 "	Shemaiah, Iddo. Azariah, Hanani. Jehu, Jahaziel. { Zechariah (son of) Jehoiada). }	Jeroboam. Jeroboam. Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri. Ahab, Ahaziah, Jeho- ram. Jehoram. Jehoram. Jehu.
II. Second Decline and Second Revival,—about 207 years,	7 Joash. 8 Amaziah. 9 Uzziah (or Azariah). 10 Jotham. 11 Ahaz. 12 HEZEKIAH. 13 Manasseh. 14 Amon. 15 JOSIAH. 16 Jehoahaz. 17 Jehoiakim. 18 Jehoiachin. 19 Zedekiah.	40 " 29 " 52 " 16 " 16 " 29 " 55 " 2 " 31 " ¼ " 11 " ¼ " 11 "	Joel, Zechariah II. Isaiah, Micah. Nahum. Zephaniah, Jeremiah. Habakkuk. Obadiah.	Jehu, Jehoahaz. Joash, Jeroboam II. { Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Peka- hiah, Pekah. Pekah. Pekah, Hoshea. Hoshea.
III. Third Decline and Third Revival, .. about 88 years..				
IV. Final Decline, .. about 23 years..				



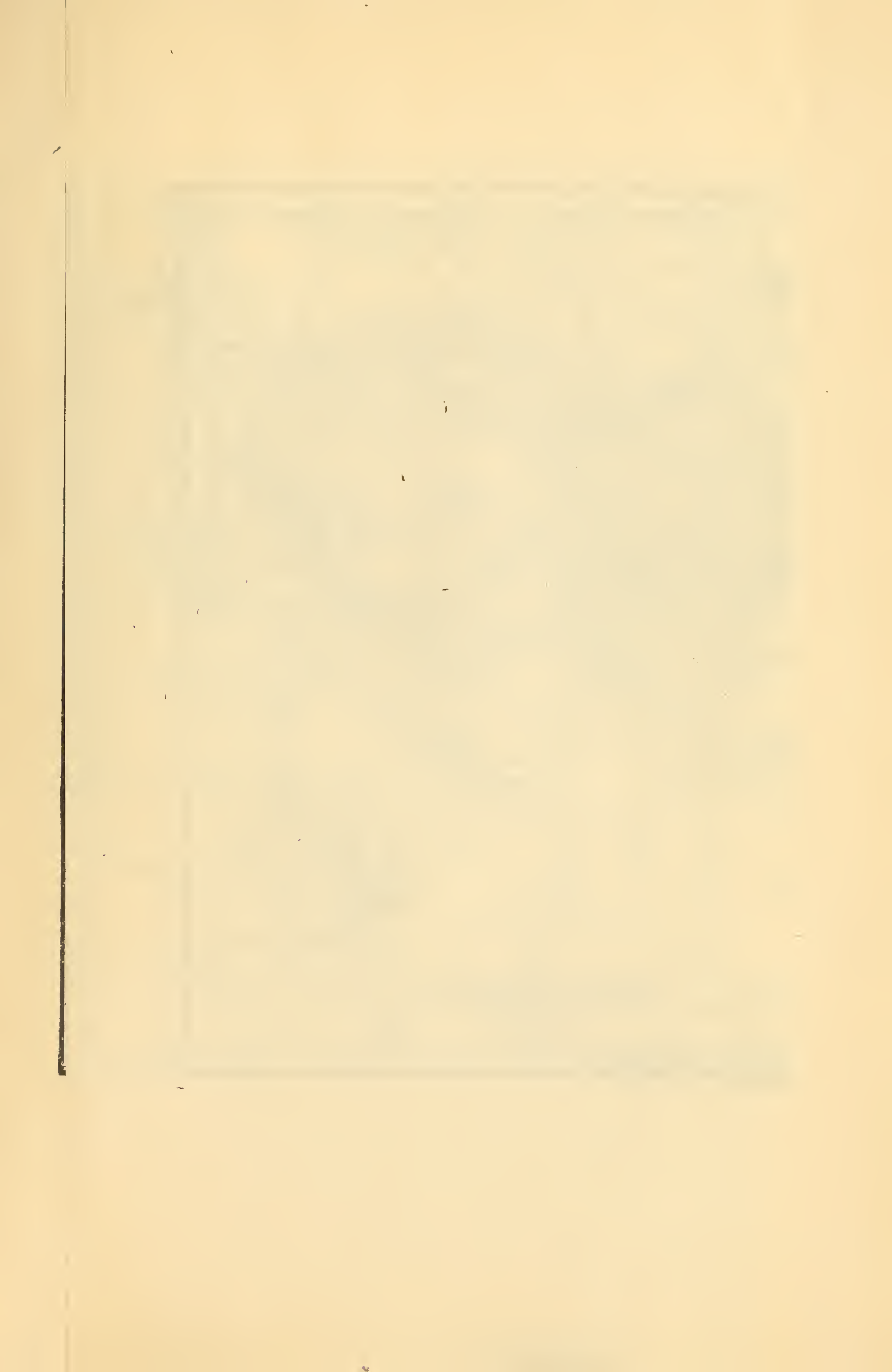
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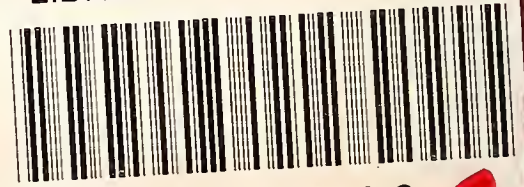


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